

Our Buddha

His Life and Teachings in His Own Words



Bhikkhu T. Seelananda

Our Buddha

His Life and Teachings in His Own Words



Bhikkhu T. Seelananda

Our Buddha

© Bhikkhu T. Seelananda

Bhavana Society Forest Monastery

97 Meditation Trail

High View, WV 26808

USA

ISBN 978-1-5323-0419-4

Published by

Bhavana Society Forest Monastery

West Virginia USA

Printed by

Speed Print Ink.,

1361 Standard Avenue
Elmont, New York. 11003

Phone: (516) 301 7671, (888) 813 1196
Fax: (516) 345 8598

For free distribution only

Our Buddha

© Bhikkhu T. Seelananda

Bhavana Society Forest Monastery

97 Meditation Trail

High View, WV 26808

USA

ISBN 978-1-5323-0419-4

Published by

Bhavana Society Forest Monastery

West Virginia USA

Printed by

Speed Print Ink.,

1361 Standard Avenue
Elmont, New York. 11003

Phone: (516) 301 7671, (888) 813 1196
Fax: (516) 345 8598

For free distribution only

Sukho Buddhânam Uppâdo

(Happy is the Birth of the Buddhâs)

**"Happy is the birth
of the Buddhas**

**Happy is the teaching
of the sublime Dhamma**

**Happy is the unity of
the Sangha**

**Happy is the
discipline of the
united ones"**

Sukho Buddhânam Uppâdo

(Happy is the Birth of the Buddhâs)

**"Happy is the birth
of the Buddhas**

**Happy is the teaching
of the sublime Dhamma**

**Happy is the unity of
the Sangha**

**Happy is the
discipline of the
united ones"**

The Gift of Dhamma Excels All Others

This Dhamma dâna (gift of Dhamma) is another special meritorious deed done by Leelâ Gomas and her husband Mervin Gomas together with their children from New York and Sri Lanka, in memory of Leelâ's Parents: **Mr. Victor Hindurangala and Mrs. Rosalyn Senâratna.**

We wish them all a peaceful samsâric journey and finally the attainment of the supreme bliss of Nibbâna.

May they all attain Nibbâna!

Excellent! Excellent! Excellent!

The Gift of Dhamma Excels All Others

This Dhamma dâna (gift of Dhamma) is another special meritorious deed done by Leelâ Gomas and her husband Mervin Gomas together with their children from New York and Sri Lanka, in memory of Leelâ's Parents: **Mr. Victor Hindurangala and Mrs. Rosalyn Senâratna.**

We wish them all a peaceful samsâric journey and finally the attainment of the supreme bliss of Nibbâna.

May they all attain Nibbâna!

Excellent! Excellent! Excellent!



Pûjemi Buddham

A Humble Offering to The Buddha

This work too is humbly and respectfully offered with utmost confidence in the triple gem in the name of the Supreme Buddha Gotama, the seventh sage (*muni sattama*) who attained supreme enlightenment in the year 588 B.C.E. under the Bodhi Tree in Buddhagayâ, India.

Excellent! Excellent! Excellent!



Pûjemi Buddham

A Humble Offering to The Buddha

This work too is humbly and respectfully offered with utmost confidence in the triple gem in the name of the Supreme Buddha Gotama, the seventh sage (*muni sattama*) who attained supreme enlightenment in the year 588 B.C.E. under the Bodhi Tree in Buddhagayâ, India.

Excellent! Excellent! Excellent!

Table of Contents

Chapter 1- The Buddha to be (<i>Bodhisatta</i>)	p. 11
His Lay Life - Birth of a Unique Being	p. 13
Childhood	p. 19
Household Life	p. 21
The Four Signs - From Darkness to Light	p. 23
Great Renunciation and Going Forth	p. 24
In Search of Truth	p. 28
Among the Jhânic Teachers	p. 28
Practicing Austerity	p. 30
The Bliss of Dhamma Through the Middle Path	p. 35
Perfectly Self-Awakened	p. 39
 Chapter 2-The Buddha was Born	 p. 46
Being Sensitive with the Bliss of Release	p. 48
Two Merchants: Tapassu and Bhallika	p. 51
Quest of a Teacher under the Shade of the Ajapâla Tree	p. 54
Realizing the Profundity of the Rediscovered Dhamma	p. 54
Meeting with the Wanderer Upaka	p. 57
The Buddha's First Sermon	p. 58
Our Buddha is Endowed with Ten Powers	p. 59
Our Buddha is Endowed with Four Intrepidities	p. 63
Our Buddha, the Most Extraordinary Man Ever Born	p. 64
The Virtue of the Buddha is Immeasurable	p. 67
The Brahmin Sela Sees Our Buddha	p. 70
The Wanderer Sabhiya Sees Our Buddha	p. 71
Uttara and Brahmâyû See Our Buddha	p. 72
Sakuludâyin Sees Our Buddha	p. 77

Table of Contents

Chapter 1- The Buddha to be (<i>Bodhisatta</i>)	p. 11
His Lay Life - Birth of a Unique Being	p. 13
Childhood	p. 19
Household Life	p. 21
The Four Signs - From Darkness to Light	p. 23
Great Renunciation and Going Forth	p. 24
In Search of Truth	p. 28
Among the Jhânic Teachers	p. 28
Practicing Austerity	p. 30
The Bliss of Dhamma Through the Middle Path	p. 35
Perfectly Self-Awakened	p. 39
 Chapter 2-The Buddha was Born	 p. 46
Being Sensitive with the Bliss of Release	p. 48
Two Merchants: Tapassu and Bhallika	p. 51
Quest of a Teacher under the Shade of the Ajapâla Tree	p. 54
Realizing the Profundity of the Rediscovered Dhamma	p. 54
Meeting with the Wanderer Upaka	p. 57
The Buddha's First Sermon	p. 58
Our Buddha is Endowed with Ten Powers	p. 59
Our Buddha is Endowed with Four Intrepidities	p. 63
Our Buddha, the Most Extraordinary Man Ever Born	p. 64
The Virtue of the Buddha is Immeasurable	p. 67
The Brahmin Sela Sees Our Buddha	p. 70
The Wanderer Sabhiya Sees Our Buddha	p. 71
Uttara and Brahmâyû See Our Buddha	p. 72
Sakuludâyin Sees Our Buddha	p. 77

Chapter 3 -What the Buddha Really Taught p. 82

Thirty-Seven Factors of Enlightenment and	
Their Basic Meaning	p. 87
The Four Establishments of Mindfulness	p. 87
The Four Kinds of Striving	p. 88
The Four Bases or Roads to Power	p. 89
The Five Spiritual Faculties	p. 90
The Five Spiritual Powers	p. 91
The Seven Factors of Enlightenment	p. 91
The Noble Eightfold Path	p. 92
How to Practice and Develop the Thirty-Seven	
Factors of Enlightenment	p. 94
The Real Teachings Expounded By The Buddha	p. 97
How the Four Establishments of Mindfulness	
Lead to the Thirty-Seven Factors of Enlightenment	p. 97

Chapter 4 -The Buddha's Technique of

Meditation (Serenity and Insight)	p. 123
Dwelling in Contemplation On Body As Body	p. 123
Mindfulness of Breath	p. 123
Mindfulness and the Four Postures	p. 128
How to Maintain Clear Comprehension of All	
Activities	p. 128
Mindfulness of the Thirty-Two Parts of The Body	p. 129
Mindfulness of Four Great Elements	p. 130
Mindfulness of Different Stages of a Corpse	p. 131
Contemplating on Feelings As Feelings	p. 131
Contemplating on Mind As Mind	p. 132
Contemplation of Mental Objects As Mental	
Objects (Dhamma)	p. 133
Complete Eradication of The Five Hindrances	p. 134

Chapter 3 -What the Buddha Really Taught p. 82

Thirty-Seven Factors of Enlightenment and	
Their Basic Meaning	p. 87
The Four Establishments of Mindfulness	p. 87
The Four Kinds of Striving	p. 88
The Four Bases or Roads to Power	p. 89
The Five Spiritual Faculties	p. 90
The Five Spiritual Powers	p. 91
The Seven Factors of Enlightenment	p. 91
The Noble Eightfold Path	p. 92
How to Practice and Develop the Thirty-Seven	
Factors of Enlightenment	p. 94
The Real Teachings Expounded By The Buddha	p. 97
How the Four Establishments of Mindfulness	
Lead to the Thirty-Seven Factors of Enlightenment	p. 97

Chapter 4 -The Buddha's Technique of

Meditation (Serenity and Insight)	p. 123
Dwelling in Contemplation On Body As Body	p. 123
Mindfulness of Breath	p. 123
Mindfulness and the Four Postures	p. 128
How to Maintain Clear Comprehension of All	
Activities	p. 128
Mindfulness of the Thirty-Two Parts of The Body	p. 129
Mindfulness of Four Great Elements	p. 130
Mindfulness of Different Stages of a Corpse	p. 131
Contemplating on Feelings As Feelings	p. 131
Contemplating on Mind As Mind	p. 132
Contemplation of Mental Objects As Mental	
Objects (Dhamma)	p. 133
Complete Eradication of The Five Hindrances	p. 134

Realization of The Five Aggregates	p. 134
The Realization of The Twelve Kinds of Bases	p. 135
Venerable Mahâ Kotthita	p. 136
Venerable Sâriputta	p. 137
Realization of The Seven Factors of Enlightenment	p. 138
Realization of The Four Noble Truths	p. 144
The Noble Eightfold Path	p. 156

Chapter 5 -The Buddha's Nibbâna and Parinibbâna

Anidassana Viññâna	p. 163
Last Days of the Buddha	p. 173
	p. 181
Foot Notes	p. 210

Realization of The Five Aggregates	p. 134
The Realization of The Twelve Kinds of Bases	p. 135
Venerable Mahâ Kotthita	p. 136
Venerable Sâriputta	p. 137
Realization of The Seven Factors of Enlightenment	p. 138
Realization of The Four Noble Truths	p. 144
The Noble Eightfold Path	p. 156

Chapter 5 -The Buddha's Nibbâna and Parinibbâna

Anidassana Viññâna	p. 163
Last Days of the Buddha	p. 173
	p. 181
Foot Notes	p. 210

Preface

Why Our Buddha? The term “Our Buddha” is used here only to show the significance of taking the maximum benefit of the Dhamma of the Buddha during this lifetime, in the Dispensation of the Buddha *Gotama*, rather than waiting for the next Buddha or Buddhas. Other than that, this is neither a jargon nor a term to be grasped on to or mislead by.

This book is the translation of the book ‘*Ape Budu Hâmuduruwo*’ written in Sinhala (published in 2013) by the same author and sponsored by the same donors. It was because of their kind invitation and generosity that this book was translated into English for the benefit of our English readers. Here, you can read the biography of the Buddha as he himself told us in his own discourses in the four major Nikâyas [original teachings].

In accordance with the teaching of Our Buddha *Gotama*, recorded in the *Cakkavatti Sihanâda Sutta* of the *Digha Nikâya*, the next Buddha, *Maithree*, will be born in the world when the life span of humans becomes 80,000 years. Now, our life span is normally less than one hundred years. The life span will continue to decrease in this manner to ten years as the descending order of a human life span. Then, from there, it would start again and slowly and gradually should increase to 80,000 years. Only then, will the Buddha Maithree be born in the world. Should we all wait until that time for the termination of this *samsâric* journey? Our Supreme Buddha said, “*Even a fraction of a second in this samsâra is sorrowful, dukkha.*”

The author has not used or quoted anything from commentaries, sub-commentaries, or any other later work simply because his intention is to give the real Dhamma, the real teachings from the very words of the Buddha himself. His effort here is just using a thread of language in order to hold the gems together as a garland of wisdom.

Preface

Why Our Buddha? The term “Our Buddha” is used here only to show the significance of taking the maximum benefit of the Dhamma of the Buddha during this lifetime, in the Dispensation of the Buddha *Gotama*, rather than waiting for the next Buddha or Buddhas. Other than that, this is neither a jargon nor a term to be grasped on to or mislead by.

This book is the translation of the book ‘*Ape Budu Hâmuduruwo*’ written in Sinhala (published in 2013) by the same author and sponsored by the same donors. It was because of their kind invitation and generosity that this book was translated into English for the benefit of our English readers. Here, you can read the biography of the Buddha as he himself told us in his own discourses in the four major Nikâyas [original teachings].

In accordance with the teaching of Our Buddha *Gotama*, recorded in the *Cakkavatti Sihanâda Sutta* of the *Digha Nikâya*, the next Buddha, *Maithree*, will be born in the world when the life span of humans becomes 80,000 years. Now, our life span is normally less than one hundred years. The life span will continue to decrease in this manner to ten years as the descending order of a human life span. Then, from there, it would start again and slowly and gradually should increase to 80,000 years. Only then, will the Buddha Maithree be born in the world. Should we all wait until that time for the termination of this *samsâric* journey? Our Supreme Buddha said, “*Even a fraction of a second in this samsâra is sorrowful, dukkha.*”

The author has not used or quoted anything from commentaries, sub-commentaries, or any other later work simply because his intention is to give the real Dhamma, the real teachings from the very words of the Buddha himself. His effort here is just using a thread of language in order to hold the gems together as a garland of wisdom.

He humbly and sincerely thanks each and every person who supported him to make this effort a success: specifically, the Venerable Bhante G.(Henepola Gunaratana) the abbot of The Bhavana Society for granting him the necessary recess to engage in meditation, reading, and writing; secondly, he thanks with much merit to the donors who supported the printing of this book. Thirdly, his heartfelt thanks go to Judy Larson, Dushmantha Ranawella, and Gyula Nagy who edited this book and finally, his thanks are due to Nilan Gomas and Chintha Felix who did type setting of the book and the printers Mr. Christopher Pius, Nilani and family from Elmont, New York.

Ven. Bhikkhu Talgaswewe Seelananda
Bhavana Society Forest Monastery
West Virginia, USA

Date:August 9, 2015

He humbly and sincerely thanks each and every person who supported him to make this effort a success: specifically, the Venerable Bhante G.(Henepola Gunaratana) the abbot of The Bhavana Society for granting him the necessary recess to engage in meditation, reading, and writing; secondly, he thanks with much merit to the donors who supported the printing of this book. Thirdly, his heartfelt thanks go to Judy Larson, Dushmantha Ranawella, and Gyula Nagy who edited this book and finally, his thanks are due to Nilan Gomas and Chintha Felix who did type setting of the book and the printers Mr. Christopher Pius, Nilani and family from Elmont, New York.

Ven. Bhikkhu Talgaswewe Seelananda
Bhavana Society Forest Monastery
West Virginia, USA

Date:August 9, 2015

Chapter 1

Siddhârtha, The Buddha to be (Bodhisatta)

As mentioned in the preface, the term “Our Buddha” is used for a specific purpose. Yes, this Buddha is ours. However, it does not mean that the Buddha belongs to any particular group like Buddhists, Americans, Sri Lankans, Indians, Chinese, or any other particular group, but to all humans and devâs. Buddha was a human born in this world. He had a human mother and a father. They all lived in India. The places such as where he was born, attained enlightenment, delivered his first sermon, and passed away have been clearly identified. Much archaeological and historical evidence of his life has been discovered.

Buddha is unparalleled, certainly matchless. Therefore, he is the Peerless One in the world. He could be compared only with another Buddha like himself. Similarly, his teaching and the Order of the disciples of the Sublime One, the community of monks and nuns that he established, are also matchless. These three; Buddha, Dhamma, and Sangha are called the “Triple Gem,” which is incomparable because their virtues are profound and immeasurable. The Buddha himself has clearly mentioned this in his discourses.

There is no need to compare him with others because he was the first arahant in the world during this era. That itself is the way to see him as an extraordinary person, a “unique being.” Recognizing similarities as similarities and dissimilarities as dissimilarities is one of the great characteristics of all intelligent and virtuous people. Specifically, even the term “Buddhist” means intelligent. Buddhists should always act as intelligent people. If they do not act intelligently, they are really not practicing Buddhists, but may be recognized as “Buddhist in name only.”

A Buddhist should always behave for the benefit of himself/herself as well as others by observing the five

Chapter 1

Siddhârtha, The Buddha to be (Bodhisatta)

As mentioned in the preface, the term “Our Buddha” is used for a specific purpose. Yes, this Buddha is ours. However, it does not mean that the Buddha belongs to any particular group like Buddhists, Americans, Sri Lankans, Indians, Chinese, or any other particular group, but to all humans and devâs. Buddha was a human born in this world. He had a human mother and a father. They all lived in India. The places such as where he was born, attained enlightenment, delivered his first sermon, and passed away have been clearly identified. Much archaeological and historical evidence of his life has been discovered.

Buddha is unparalleled, certainly matchless. Therefore, he is the Peerless One in the world. He could be compared only with another Buddha like himself. Similarly, his teaching and the Order of the disciples of the Sublime One, the community of monks and nuns that he established, are also matchless. These three; Buddha, Dhamma, and Sangha are called the “Triple Gem,” which is incomparable because their virtues are profound and immeasurable. The Buddha himself has clearly mentioned this in his discourses.

There is no need to compare him with others because he was the first arahant in the world during this era. That itself is the way to see him as an extraordinary person, a “unique being.” Recognizing similarities as similarities and dissimilarities as dissimilarities is one of the great characteristics of all intelligent and virtuous people. Specifically, even the term “Buddhist” means intelligent. Buddhists should always act as intelligent people. If they do not act intelligently, they are really not practicing Buddhists, but may be recognized as “Buddhist in name only.”

A Buddhist should always behave for the benefit of himself/herself as well as others by observing the five

precepts and restraining from ten unwholesome deeds(*paspav* and *dasa akusal*).Such a person might be a member of a church, kovil/temple, or mosque and still be a very good Buddhist. The Buddha never taught Dhamma to a particular chosen group called “Buddhists.”That term was coined later to refer to those following the Buddha's path. His Dhamma is for all humans and deities who recognize virtue and goodness.

In a broader sense, the Buddha is Buddha to all humans, deities, *Brahmas*, and all beings living in this era. That is why he is called “Our Buddha” in this book.

According to his daily routine, early in the morning the Buddha surveyed the world with his unique, special knowledge called “the attainment of great compassion” (*mahâ karunâ samâpatti*) and understood which beings needed assistance on that particular day for the attainment of spiritual growth and achievements. Since the Buddha rendered such service for forty-five years, it is impossible to think of his benefits as being limited to only a certain group called “Buddhists.”¹

On the contrary, in the discourse of *Many Kinds of Elements* in *The Middle Length Sayings of The Buddha*,² Our Supreme Buddha very clearly said that there would be only one Supreme Buddha at a time in the world. In the *Dhammapada*, it is said that such supreme persons are very rare in the world. Wherever they are born, such a clan thrives happily and becomes prosperous.³ Our Buddha himself described us in *The Numerical Discourses of the Buddha*, the birth of a Buddha as follows. He says, “*Bhikkhus*, there is one person who arises in the world for the welfare of many people, for the happiness of many people, out of compassion for the world, for the good, welfare, and happiness of *devâs* and human beings. Who is that one person? The *Tathâgata*, the *Arahant*, the Perfectly Enlightened One. This is that one person who arises in the world for the welfare of many people, for the happiness of many people, out of compassion for the world,

precepts and restraining from ten unwholesome deeds(*paspav* and *dasa akusal*).Such a person might be a member of a church, kovil/temple, or mosque and still be a very good Buddhist. The Buddha never taught Dhamma to a particular chosen group called “Buddhists.”That term was coined later to refer to those following the Buddha's path. His Dhamma is for all humans and deities who recognize virtue and goodness.

In a broader sense, the Buddha is Buddha to all humans, deities, *Brahmas*, and all beings living in this era. That is why he is called “Our Buddha” in this book.

According to his daily routine, early in the morning the Buddha surveyed the world with his unique, special knowledge called “the attainment of great compassion” (*mahâ karunâ samâpatti*) and understood which beings needed assistance on that particular day for the attainment of spiritual growth and achievements. Since the Buddha rendered such service for forty-five years, it is impossible to think of his benefits as being limited to only a certain group called “Buddhists.”¹

On the contrary, in the discourse of *Many Kinds of Elements* in *The Middle Length Sayings of The Buddha*,² Our Supreme Buddha very clearly said that there would be only one Supreme Buddha at a time in the world. In the *Dhammapada*, it is said that such supreme persons are very rare in the world. Wherever they are born, such a clan thrives happily and becomes prosperous.³ Our Buddha himself described us in *The Numerical Discourses of the Buddha*, the birth of a Buddha as follows. He says, “*Bhikkhus*, there is one person who arises in the world for the welfare of many people, for the happiness of many people, out of compassion for the world, for the good, welfare, and happiness of *devâs* and human beings. Who is that one person? The *Tathâgata*, the *Arahant*, the Perfectly Enlightened One. This is that one person who arises in the world for the welfare of many people, for the happiness of many people, out of compassion for the world,

for the good, welfare, and happiness of *devâs* and human beings.”⁴

As the Buddha himself has declared in discourses 1-25 of the first chapter of *The Numerical Discourses of the Buddha*, the birth of a certain person is very rare in the world. That person is none other than the *Tathâgata*, the worthy and the perfectly Self-Awakened One, the Buddha. He was an extraordinary human being. His passing away is a great cause for pain and grief for multitudes of people. That peerless one is the best of all creatures. Together with his birth, there arises a great wisdom, a great light and six unsurpassed things for nondecline in the world.⁵ Similarly, there arises the opportunity to realize the four kinds of analytical knowledge: 1. Of true meaning, 2. Of the law (Dhamma), 3. Of language (how to articulate the Dhamma), and 4. Of discernment: ability to understand the numerous and diversified elements of world systems, realization of the fruition of knowledge and liberation, the fruition of stream entry, the fruition of once returner, the fruition of non-returner and the attainment of the *arahant*-ship.

His Lay Life - Birth of a Unique Being **(Mindfully from Womb to This World)**

The Buddha has clearly mentioned in the discourses how he descended from *Tusita* heaven and was mindfully conceived in his mother's (*Mâyâ*) womb. His father, *Suddhodana*, was then the king of *Kapilavatthu*. Buddha's birth is certainly a happy one (*sukho Buddhânam uppâdo*).⁶ The birth of a Buddha, a supremely enlightened being, is extremely rare in the world. As the Buddha said in Pâli, “*kiccho Buddhânam uppâdo*.”⁷

Our Buddha was born on the full moon day of May (Vesak) 2638 years ago. Since his birth, enlightenment, and passing away each took place on a full moon day of Vesak, it has been declared by the United Nations as the “Most Sacred Day” for millions of Buddhists around the world.

for the good, welfare, and happiness of *devâs* and human beings.”⁴

As the Buddha himself has declared in discourses 1-25 of the first chapter of *The Numerical Discourses of the Buddha*, the birth of a certain person is very rare in the world. That person is none other than the *Tathâgata*, the worthy and the perfectly Self-Awakened One, the Buddha. He was an extraordinary human being. His passing away is a great cause for pain and grief for multitudes of people. That peerless one is the best of all creatures. Together with his birth, there arises a great wisdom, a great light and six unsurpassed things for nondecline in the world.⁵ Similarly, there arises the opportunity to realize the four kinds of analytical knowledge: 1. Of true meaning, 2. Of the law (Dhamma), 3. Of language (how to articulate the Dhamma), and 4. Of discernment: ability to understand the numerous and diversified elements of world systems, realization of the fruition of knowledge and liberation, the fruition of stream entry, the fruition of once returner, the fruition of non-returner and the attainment of the *arahant*-ship.

His Lay Life - Birth of a Unique Being **(Mindfully from Womb to This World)**

The Buddha has clearly mentioned in the discourses how he descended from *Tusita* heaven and was mindfully conceived in his mother's (*Mâyâ*) womb. His father, *Suddhodana*, was then the king of *Kapilavatthu*. Buddha's birth is certainly a happy one (*sukho Buddhânam uppâdo*).⁶ The birth of a Buddha, a supremely enlightened being, is extremely rare in the world. As the Buddha said in Pâli, “*kiccho Buddhânam uppâdo*.”⁷

Our Buddha was born on the full moon day of May (Vesak) 2638 years ago. Since his birth, enlightenment, and passing away each took place on a full moon day of Vesak, it has been declared by the United Nations as the “Most Sacred Day” for millions of Buddhists around the world.

The birth of this little one, the crown-gem of humans, was a marvelous event. True, it may be difficult for ordinary humans to comprehend. However, it happened on that special day, in the year 623B.C.E. No one else in the world has been born as he was. This is not simply a legend or another folktale. After his attainment of enlightenment, the Buddha himself revealed what really happened. As he has said, he was constantly mindful throughout the whole life. That was how he realized everything within and without, internal and external.

The Buddha told his own birth story to his attendant monk, Venerable *Ananda*. Once Venerable *Ananda* told this in the presence of the Buddha and his community of fellow monks. Our Buddha revealed the same thing to others through his discourses. That is how we have received this information from generation to generation.

One day, addressing his fellow monks Venerable *Ananda* said, “I will tell you this exactly as I have heard of it from the lips of the Buddha.” This is according to the discourse of *Wonderful and Marvelous Things in The Middle Length Sayings of the Buddha*. (This sutta number itself is very easy to remember, as easy as A-B-C, i.e. one, two, three: #123). This is one of the most interesting discourses about the Buddha that explains many things about him. Perhaps some of the information may be entirely new to you.

Once, while the Buddha was dwelling at *Sāvatti* in *Jeta's* Grove, many monks, after having gone for alms round and after their noon-meal met in the guest-hall. While they were discussing a particular topic, the Buddha approached them. With his arrival, the discussion was interrupted. The Buddha inquired about the topic that was being discussed. They said that they were discussing the wonderful and marvelous things of the Buddha. Thereafter, with the permission of the Buddha, his attendant monk, Venerable *Ananda* delivered this discourse of *Wonderful and Marvelous Things* pertaining to the life of the Buddha.

The birth of this little one, the crown-gem of humans, was a marvelous event. True, it may be difficult for ordinary humans to comprehend. However, it happened on that special day, in the year 623B.C.E. No one else in the world has been born as he was. This is not simply a legend or another folktale. After his attainment of enlightenment, the Buddha himself revealed what really happened. As he has said, he was constantly mindful throughout the whole life. That was how he realized everything within and without, internal and external.

The Buddha told his own birth story to his attendant monk, Venerable *Ananda*. Once Venerable *Ananda* told this in the presence of the Buddha and his community of fellow monks. Our Buddha revealed the same thing to others through his discourses. That is how we have received this information from generation to generation.

One day, addressing his fellow monks Venerable *Ananda* said, “I will tell you this exactly as I have heard of it from the lips of the Buddha.” This is according to the discourse of *Wonderful and Marvelous Things in The Middle Length Sayings of the Buddha*. (This sutta number itself is very easy to remember, as easy as A-B-C, i.e. one, two, three: #123). This is one of the most interesting discourses about the Buddha that explains many things about him. Perhaps some of the information may be entirely new to you.

Once, while the Buddha was dwelling at *Sāvatti* in *Jeta's* Grove, many monks, after having gone for alms round and after their noon-meal met in the guest-hall. While they were discussing a particular topic, the Buddha approached them. With his arrival, the discussion was interrupted. The Buddha inquired about the topic that was being discussed. They said that they were discussing the wonderful and marvelous things of the Buddha. Thereafter, with the permission of the Buddha, his attendant monk, Venerable *Ananda* delivered this discourse of *Wonderful and Marvelous Things* pertaining to the life of the Buddha.

This is how the Venerable *Ananda* revealed the facts about the birth of the Buddha exactly as the Buddha had told him on one occasion. Venerable *Ananda* said, “As I have heard and learned this Venerable Sirs from the Blessed One's own lips: “Mindful and fully aware, *Ananda*, the *Bodhisatta* appeared in the *Tusita* heaven. Mindfully he dwelled in the *Tusita* heaven. He lived there for a full lifespan and then mindfully descended from *Tusita* heaven to the mother's womb. When he descended, a great immeasurable light surpassing the splendor of the gods appeared in the world with its gods, its *Mâras*, and its *Brahmâs*, in this generation with its recluses and *brahmins*, with its princes and its people. Even in those abysmal world interspaces of vacancy, gloom and utter darkness, called *lokântarika-hell*, where the moon and the sun as mighty and powerful as they are, could not make their light prevail there too a great immeasurable light surpassing the splendor of the gods appeared. Whatever beings were born there perceived each other by that light only. This ten-thousand-world system shook and quaked and trembled and there too a great immeasurable light surpassing the splendor of the gods appeared.

“When the *Bodhisatta* descended into the womb of the mother, four great deities came to guard him from the four quarters so that no humans or non-humans or anyone at all could harm the *Bodhisatta* or his mother. On the day that the *Bodhisatta* descended into his mother's womb, his mother was intrinsically virtuous; refraining from killing living beings, refraining from taking that which is not given, from misconduct in sensual pleasures, from false speech, and from wines, liquors and intoxicants.

“When the *Bodhisatta* descended into his mother's womb, no sensual thought arose in his mother concerning men and she had no inclination in lustful mind at all to any man.

“When the *Bodhisatta* descended into his mother's womb, she obtained the five cords of sensual pleasure and was furnished and endowed with them. That means she was fully comfortable and entirely at ease. Once the *Bodhisatta* was

This is how the Venerable *Ananda* revealed the facts about the birth of the Buddha exactly as the Buddha had told him on one occasion. Venerable *Ananda* said, “As I have heard and learned this Venerable Sirs from the Blessed One's own lips: “Mindful and fully aware, *Ananda*, the *Bodhisatta* appeared in the *Tusita* heaven. Mindfully he dwelled in the *Tusita* heaven. He lived there for a full lifespan and then mindfully descended from *Tusita* heaven to the mother's womb. When he descended, a great immeasurable light surpassing the splendor of the gods appeared in the world with its gods, its *Mâras*, and its *Brahmâs*, in this generation with its recluses and *brahmins*, with its princes and its people. Even in those abysmal world interspaces of vacancy, gloom and utter darkness, called *lokântarika-hell*, where the moon and the sun as mighty and powerful as they are, could not make their light prevail there too a great immeasurable light surpassing the splendor of the gods appeared. Whatever beings were born there perceived each other by that light only. This ten-thousand-world system shook and quaked and trembled and there too a great immeasurable light surpassing the splendor of the gods appeared.

“When the *Bodhisatta* descended into the womb of the mother, four great deities came to guard him from the four quarters so that no humans or non-humans or anyone at all could harm the *Bodhisatta* or his mother. On the day that the *Bodhisatta* descended into his mother's womb, his mother was intrinsically virtuous; refraining from killing living beings, refraining from taking that which is not given, from misconduct in sensual pleasures, from false speech, and from wines, liquors and intoxicants.

“When the *Bodhisatta* descended into his mother's womb, no sensual thought arose in his mother concerning men and she had no inclination in lustful mind at all to any man.

“When the *Bodhisatta* descended into his mother's womb, she obtained the five cords of sensual pleasure and was furnished and endowed with them. That means she was fully comfortable and entirely at ease. Once the *Bodhisatta* was

descended into his mother's womb, no kind of affliction arose in her. She was blessed and free from bodily fatigue. She was able to see the *Bodhisatta* within her womb with all his limbs lacking no faculty. It was as if one were to see a blue, yellow, red, white or brown thread in a fine purest, translucent, eight faceted, and well cut beryl gem.

“Seven days after his birth, the *Bodhisatta's* mother passed away and was reborn in the *Tusita* heaven. All other women deliver the babies after nine months or ten months, but the *Bodhisatta's* mother delivered him exactly after ten months. All other women deliver the babies either sitting or lying down, but the *Bodhisatta's* mother delivered the baby standing.

“When the *Bodhisatta* was delivered, he was first received by the deities and then passed to the humans. Before he was touching the floor, the four great kings of deities received him and presented him to the queen saying, “*Rejoice O queen, your son of great power has been born!*”

“When the *Bodhisatta* was born, he was unsullied, unsmearred by water or humors or blood or any kind of impurity but clean and unsullied.

“With his birth, two jets of water appeared to pour from the sky, one cool and one warm; for bathing the *Bodhisatta* and his mother.

“Upon his birth, stood firmly on the ground with his feet, and then he took seven steps towards north and while a white parasol was being held over him, he surveyed each quarter and uttered the words of the leader of the herd as follows:

I am the highest in the world;
I am the best in the world;
I am the foremost in the world.
This is my last birth; now there is no renewal
Of being for me."

descended into his mother's womb, no kind of affliction arose in her. She was blessed and free from bodily fatigue. She was able to see the *Bodhisatta* within her womb with all his limbs lacking no faculty. It was as if one were to see a blue, yellow, red, white or brown thread in a fine purest, translucent, eight faceted, and well cut beryl gem.

“Seven days after his birth, the *Bodhisatta's* mother passed away and was reborn in the *Tusita* heaven. All other women deliver the babies after nine months or ten months, but the *Bodhisatta's* mother delivered him exactly after ten months. All other women deliver the babies either sitting or lying down, but the *Bodhisatta's* mother delivered the baby standing.

“When the *Bodhisatta* was delivered, he was first received by the deities and then passed to the humans. Before he was touching the floor, the four great kings of deities received him and presented him to the queen saying, “*Rejoice O queen, your son of great power has been born!*”

“When the *Bodhisatta* was born, he was unsullied, unsmearred by water or humors or blood or any kind of impurity but clean and unsullied.

“With his birth, two jets of water appeared to pour from the sky, one cool and one warm; for bathing the *Bodhisatta* and his mother.

“Upon his birth, stood firmly on the ground with his feet, and then he took seven steps towards north and while a white parasol was being held over him, he surveyed each quarter and uttered the words of the leader of the herd as follows:

I am the highest in the world;
I am the best in the world;
I am the foremost in the world.
This is my last birth; now there is no renewal
Of being for me."

(Aggohamasmi lokassa
jetthohamasmi lokassa
Setthohamasmi lokassa
ayamantimâjâti natthidâni punabbhavo.)

In the Great Discourse on the Lineage, of the *Digha Nikâya*,⁸ Our Buddha has revealed a story of the dim past of ninety-one eons which was unheard and unseen of before by anyone, anywhere. Explicitly he has given full details of the lives of the seven *Buddhas* in the past including his own life. By explaining about himself, the Buddha disclosed that his mother was *Mahâ Mâyâ*, his father was *Suddhodana*, and he was born in the kingdom of *Kapilavatthu*.

The *Nâlaka Sutta* of the *Sutta Nipâta* also provides much information concerning the Buddha's birth. According to that sutta, on the day prince *Siddhartha* was born, the great sage, *Asita*, visited a heavenly realm for his day's abiding. He saw the deities of the *Tâvatimsa* heaven gathered together, clad in pure white, full of joy, and over flowing with praises for Indra, the head of gods, and dancing, singing, and waving their robes and banners with delight. Then, he asked the reason for such a delighted heart of glory. They then said, "In a village called *Lumbini* in the *Sâkya* country, a *Bodhisatta* who will be the pinnacle, the peerless, and the Supreme Buddha for the benefit of both humans and gods was born, that is why we are glad."

On hearing this, *Asita* the sage went to the palace of King *Suddhodana*. Having approached there and having taken a seat he said, "Where is the prince? I also would like to see him." Thereupon, the newborn prince, like shining, glowing, and beautiful molten gold that was taken out of the furnace by a skillful goldsmith, was presented to the sage *Asita*. With a delighted heart, the sage received the prince.

The Sage who was eminent in the art of signs and Veda, examined the signs of the prince and started to contemplate and said, "He is the best among the bipeds." After that, he

(Aggohamasmi lokassa
jetthohamasmi lokassa
Setthohamasmi lokassa
ayamantimâjâti natthidâni punabbhavo.)

In the Great Discourse on the Lineage, of the *Digha Nikâya*,⁸ Our Buddha has revealed a story of the dim past of ninety-one eons which was unheard and unseen of before by anyone, anywhere. Explicitly he has given full details of the lives of the seven *Buddhas* in the past including his own life. By explaining about himself, the Buddha disclosed that his mother was *Mahâ Mâyâ*, his father was *Suddhodana*, and he was born in the kingdom of *Kapilavatthu*.

The *Nâlaka Sutta* of the *Sutta Nipâta* also provides much information concerning the Buddha's birth. According to that sutta, on the day prince *Siddhartha* was born, the great sage, *Asita*, visited a heavenly realm for his day's abiding. He saw the deities of the *Tâvatimsa* heaven gathered together, clad in pure white, full of joy, and over flowing with praises for Indra, the head of gods, and dancing, singing, and waving their robes and banners with delight. Then, he asked the reason for such a delighted heart of glory. They then said, "In a village called *Lumbini* in the *Sâkya* country, a *Bodhisatta* who will be the pinnacle, the peerless, and the Supreme Buddha for the benefit of both humans and gods was born, that is why we are glad."

On hearing this, *Asita* the sage went to the palace of King *Suddhodana*. Having approached there and having taken a seat he said, "Where is the prince? I also would like to see him." Thereupon, the newborn prince, like shining, glowing, and beautiful molten gold that was taken out of the furnace by a skillful goldsmith, was presented to the sage *Asita*. With a delighted heart, the sage received the prince.

The Sage who was eminent in the art of signs and Veda, examined the signs of the prince and started to contemplate and said, "He is the best among the bipeds." After that, he

reflected upon himself and started to cry, with a heart full of sorrow. Having seen this, the *Sākyans* inquired whether there was something wrong about the life of the prince. “No, there is nothing wrong about the prince or his life, this prince will be the supreme Buddha. He will teach the *Dhamma* for the benefit and happiness of many. His dispensation will spread all over, but I will not be able to stay here in this world that long. That was why I cried.” Thereafter, the sage went to see his nephew *Nālaka* and asked him to go to the refuge of the Buddha and get his ordination in the dispensation of the Buddha.⁹

Perhaps, you may have read or heard many different stories of the birth of the Buddha from various sources. Our intention here is not to relate another such story, but to present readers the real facts of his life and explain exactly what happened according to what is documented in the Buddha's discourses.

Once, referring to his birth while addressing the disciples, the Buddha said, “Monks, in the evening, the lion, the king of beasts, comes out from his lair. Having come out, he stretches himself, surveys the four quarters all around, and roars his lion's roar three times. Then, he sets out in search of game.

“When the lion, the king of beasts roars, whatever animals hear the sound filled with fear, a sense of urgency, and terror. Those who live in holes enter their holes; those who live in the water enter the water; those who live in the woods enter the woods; and the birds fly up into the air. Even those royal bull-elephants, bound by strong thongs in the villages, towns, and capital cities, burst and break their bonds asunder; frightened, they urinate and defecate and flee here and there. So powerful, Monks, is the lion, the king of beasts, among the animals, so majestic and mighty.

“So too, Monks, when the *Tathâgata* arises in the world, an *arahant*, perfectly enlightened, accomplished in true knowledge and conduct, fortunate, knower of the world, unsurpassed leader of persons to be tamed, teacher of *devâs* and humans, the Enlightened One, the Blessed One, he

reflected upon himself and started to cry, with a heart full of sorrow. Having seen this, the *Sākyans* inquired whether there was something wrong about the life of the prince. “No, there is nothing wrong about the prince or his life, this prince will be the supreme Buddha. He will teach the *Dhamma* for the benefit and happiness of many. His dispensation will spread all over, but I will not be able to stay here in this world that long. That was why I cried.” Thereafter, the sage went to see his nephew *Nālaka* and asked him to go to the refuge of the Buddha and get his ordination in the dispensation of the Buddha.⁹

Perhaps, you may have read or heard many different stories of the birth of the Buddha from various sources. Our intention here is not to relate another such story, but to present readers the real facts of his life and explain exactly what happened according to what is documented in the Buddha's discourses.

Once, referring to his birth while addressing the disciples, the Buddha said, “Monks, in the evening, the lion, the king of beasts, comes out from his lair. Having come out, he stretches himself, surveys the four quarters all around, and roars his lion's roar three times. Then, he sets out in search of game.

“When the lion, the king of beasts roars, whatever animals hear the sound filled with fear, a sense of urgency, and terror. Those who live in holes enter their holes; those who live in the water enter the water; those who live in the woods enter the woods; and the birds fly up into the air. Even those royal bull-elephants, bound by strong thongs in the villages, towns, and capital cities, burst and break their bonds asunder; frightened, they urinate and defecate and flee here and there. So powerful, Monks, is the lion, the king of beasts, among the animals, so majestic and mighty.

“So too, Monks, when the *Tathâgata* arises in the world, an *arahant*, perfectly enlightened, accomplished in true knowledge and conduct, fortunate, knower of the world, unsurpassed leader of persons to be tamed, teacher of *devâs* and humans, the Enlightened One, the Blessed One, he

teaches the *Dhamma* thus: 'Such is form, such its origin, such its passing away; such is feeling ... such is perception ... such are volitional formations ... such is consciousness, such its origin, such its passing away.'

“Then, Monks, when those *devās* who are long-lived, beautiful, abounding in happiness, dwelling for a long time in lofty palaces, hear the *Tathāgata's* teaching of the *Dhamma*, they are for the most part filled with fear, a sense of urgency, and terror, [saying]: 'It seems, sir, that we are impermanent, though we thought ourselves permanent; it seems, sir, that we are unstable, though we thought ourselves stable; it seems, sir, that we are non-eternal, though we thought ourselves eternal. It seems, sir, that we are impermanent, unstable, non-eternal, included within identity.' So powerful, Monks, is the *Tathāgata* over this world together with its *devās*, so majestic and mighty.”

Childhood -

A Little One Under a Rose-Apple Tree

In accordance with his various discourses, Our Buddha was mindful from a very young age. When he was born, he was mindful, while living here in this society, he was mindful, and finally at the age of eighty when he departed from this world, he was mindful. At the end of his life, he gradually attained different *jhānas* one by one and mindfully and clearly comprehending attained the final *parinibbāna*, the cessation of physicality, mentality, and the consciousness. Therefore, what we all have to understand clearly is that *Our Buddha was born mindfully, lived in this world mindfully, and passed away into parinibbāna mindfully*. Thus, he was ever-mindful, everalert, the greatest being ever born on this earth.

There are two terms that should be understood clearly. They are “mindfulness” and “clear comprehension”(*sati and sampajañña*). In the discourses, we often come across these two terms together. Where there is mindfulness, there is clear comprehension and viceversa. When one has both mindfulness and clear comprehension, one can see things as

teaches the *Dhamma* thus: 'Such is form, such its origin, such its passing away; such is feeling ... such is perception ... such are volitional formations ... such is consciousness, such its origin, such its passing away.'

“Then, Monks, when those *devās* who are long-lived, beautiful, abounding in happiness, dwelling for a long time in lofty palaces, hear the *Tathāgata's* teaching of the *Dhamma*, they are for the most part filled with fear, a sense of urgency, and terror, [saying]: 'It seems, sir, that we are impermanent, though we thought ourselves permanent; it seems, sir, that we are unstable, though we thought ourselves stable; it seems, sir, that we are non-eternal, though we thought ourselves eternal. It seems, sir, that we are impermanent, unstable, non-eternal, included within identity.' So powerful, Monks, is the *Tathāgata* over this world together with its *devās*, so majestic and mighty.”

Childhood -

A Little One Under a Rose-Apple Tree

In accordance with his various discourses, Our Buddha was mindful from a very young age. When he was born, he was mindful, while living here in this society, he was mindful, and finally at the age of eighty when he departed from this world, he was mindful. At the end of his life, he gradually attained different *jhānas* one by one and mindfully and clearly comprehending attained the final *parinibbāna*, the cessation of physicality, mentality, and the consciousness. Therefore, what we all have to understand clearly is that *Our Buddha was born mindfully, lived in this world mindfully, and passed away into parinibbāna mindfully*. Thus, he was ever-mindful, everalert, the greatest being ever born on this earth.

There are two terms that should be understood clearly. They are “mindfulness” and “clear comprehension”(*sati and sampajañña*). In the discourses, we often come across these two terms together. Where there is mindfulness, there is clear comprehension and viceversa. When one has both mindfulness and clear comprehension, one can see things as

they really are. When we develop both these factors or qualities, our life becomes more and more peaceful and happy. Both of these are essential for all of us, for the happiness of this world, the next world, and finally for the attainment of enlightenment. More significantly, both these should go together, hand in hand. Our Buddha has taught this in his discourses together as “*sato ca sampajāno ca*” meaning “mindfully and clearly comprehending.” These are the two things that one has to develop in meditation. As mentioned in the discourses, Our Buddha had both these qualities from his birth. It was because of his mindfulness and clear comprehension that he was able to see the world as well as himself, differently. As he had been practicing both these even in his previous lives, from his early days, moment-by-moment both these qualities came to perfection.

In the *MahâSaccaka Sutta*, *Bodhirâjakumâra Sutta*, and the *Sangârava Sutta* of the *Majjhima Nikâya*, Our Buddha has clearly mentioned that at about five years of age he sat under a tree and practiced meditation while his father and some other persons were engaged in plowing the field.¹¹ However, we do not find further details about this incident. Later in his life, our Buddha practiced severe austerities for six years and finally thought, “Whatever recluses or *brahmin* in the past have experienced painful, racking, piercing feelings due to exertion, this is the utmost, there is none beyond this. And whatever recluses and *brahmins* in the future will experience painful, racking, piercing feelings due to exertion, this is the utmost, there is none beyond this. And whatever recluses and *brahmin* sat present experience painful, racking, piercing feelings due to exertion, this is the utmost, there is none beyond this. But by this racking practice of austerities I have not attained any super human states, any distinction in knowledge and vision worthy of the noble ones.” And then he contemplated in this manner, “Could there be another way to the attainment of enlightenment?”

It was at that time he remembered how he meditated under the rose apple tree. This account was given in the *Sangârava Sutta* of *The Middle Length Sayings of the Buddha*. As he

they really are. When we develop both these factors or qualities, our life becomes more and more peaceful and happy. Both of these are essential for all of us, for the happiness of this world, the next world, and finally for the attainment of enlightenment. More significantly, both these should go together, hand in hand. Our Buddha has taught this in his discourses together as “*sato ca sampajāno ca*” meaning “mindfully and clearly comprehending.” These are the two things that one has to develop in meditation. As mentioned in the discourses, Our Buddha had both these qualities from his birth. It was because of his mindfulness and clear comprehension that he was able to see the world as well as himself, differently. As he had been practicing both these even in his previous lives, from his early days, moment-by-moment both these qualities came to perfection.

In the *MahâSaccaka Sutta*, *Bodhirâjakumâra Sutta*, and the *Sangârava Sutta* of the *Majjhima Nikâya*, Our Buddha has clearly mentioned that at about five years of age he sat under a tree and practiced meditation while his father and some other persons were engaged in plowing the field.¹¹ However, we do not find further details about this incident. Later in his life, our Buddha practiced severe austerities for six years and finally thought, “Whatever recluses or *brahmin* in the past have experienced painful, racking, piercing feelings due to exertion, this is the utmost, there is none beyond this. And whatever recluses and *brahmins* in the future will experience painful, racking, piercing feelings due to exertion, this is the utmost, there is none beyond this. And whatever recluses and *brahmin* sat present experience painful, racking, piercing feelings due to exertion, this is the utmost, there is none beyond this. But by this racking practice of austerities I have not attained any super human states, any distinction in knowledge and vision worthy of the noble ones.” And then he contemplated in this manner, “Could there be another way to the attainment of enlightenment?”

It was at that time he remembered how he meditated under the rose apple tree. This account was given in the *Sangârava Sutta* of *The Middle Length Sayings of the Buddha*. As he

contemplated his childhood meditation under the cool shade of the rose apple tree, he realized that quite secluded from sense pleasures, secluded from unwholesome states of mind, he entered and dwelt in the first *jhâna*.

With this contemplation of the early days of his life, the ascetic *Siddhârtha* comprehended through his consciousness, blended with mindful reflection, “Why should I be afraid of happiness that which is free from sense pleasures and free from unwholesome states?” With this reassurance of mind, having understood that it was quite impossible to practice with a sickly body, he decided to take enough solid food and then he practiced the *Dhamma*.

Household Life -

A Delicate, Princely Life Knowing Naught of Sorrow

Before his enlightenment, Our Buddha led a successful lay life. Without lacking any sensual pleasures, he lived a princely life. Once, addressing the monks, the Buddha explained how he led his lay life, as follows:

“*Bhikkhus*, I was delicately nurtured, most delicately nurtured, extremely delicately nurtured. At my father's residence, lotus ponds were made just for my enjoyment: in one of them blue lotus bloomed, in another red lotus, and in a third white lotus. I used no sandalwood unless it came from *Kâsi* and my headdress, jacket, lower garment, and upper garment were made of cloth from *Kâsi*. By day and night, a white canopy was held over me so that cold and heat, dust, grass, and dew would not settle on me.

“I had three mansions: one for the winter, one for the summer, and one for the rainy season. I spent the four months of the rains in the rainy-season mansion, being entertained by musicians, none of whom were male, and I did not leave the mansion. While in other people's homes, slaves, workers, and servants are given broken rice together with sour gruel for their meals, and in my father's residence, they were given choice hill rice, meat, and boiled rice.

contemplated his childhood meditation under the cool shade of the rose apple tree, he realized that quite secluded from sense pleasures, secluded from unwholesome states of mind, he entered and dwelt in the first *jhâna*.

With this contemplation of the early days of his life, the ascetic *Siddhârtha* comprehended through his consciousness, blended with mindful reflection, “Why should I be afraid of happiness that which is free from sense pleasures and free from unwholesome states?” With this reassurance of mind, having understood that it was quite impossible to practice with a sickly body, he decided to take enough solid food and then he practiced the *Dhamma*.

Household Life -

A Delicate, Princely Life Knowing Naught of Sorrow

Before his enlightenment, Our Buddha led a successful lay life. Without lacking any sensual pleasures, he lived a princely life. Once, addressing the monks, the Buddha explained how he led his lay life, as follows:

“*Bhikkhus*, I was delicately nurtured, most delicately nurtured, extremely delicately nurtured. At my father's residence, lotus ponds were made just for my enjoyment: in one of them blue lotus bloomed, in another red lotus, and in a third white lotus. I used no sandalwood unless it came from *Kâsi* and my headdress, jacket, lower garment, and upper garment were made of cloth from *Kâsi*. By day and night, a white canopy was held over me so that cold and heat, dust, grass, and dew would not settle on me.

“I had three mansions: one for the winter, one for the summer, and one for the rainy season. I spent the four months of the rains in the rainy-season mansion, being entertained by musicians, none of whom were male, and I did not leave the mansion. While in other people's homes, slaves, workers, and servants are given broken rice together with sour gruel for their meals, and in my father's residence, they were given choice hill rice, meat, and boiled rice.

“Amid such splendor and a delicate life, it occurred to me: 'An uninstructed worldling, though himself subject to old age, not exempt from old age, feels repelled, humiliated, and disgusted when he sees another who is old, overlooking his own situation. Now, I too am subject to old age and am not exempt from old age. Such being the case, if I were to feel repelled, humiliated, and disgusted when seeing another who is old, that would not be proper for me.' When I reflected thus, my intoxication with youth was completely abandoned.

“[Again, it occurred to me:] 'An uninstructed worldling, though himself subject to illness, not exempt from illness, feels repelled, humiliated, and disgusted when he sees another who is ill, overlooking his own situation. Now, I too am subject to illness and am not exempt from illness. Such being the case, if I were to feel repelled, humiliated, and disgusted when seeing another who is ill, that would not be proper for me.' When I reflected thus, my intoxication with health was completely abandoned.

“[Again, it occurred to me:] 'An uninstructed worldling, though himself subject to death, not exempt from death, feels repelled, humiliated, and disgusted when he sees another who has died, overlooking his own situation. Now, I too am subject to death and am not exempt from death. Such being the case, if I were to feel repelled, humiliated, and disgusted when seeing another who has died, that would not be proper for me.' When I reflected thus, my intoxication with life was completely abandoned.

“There are, *bhikkhus*, these three kinds of intoxication. What three: Intoxication of youth, intoxication of health and intoxication of life. An uninstructed worldling, intoxicated with youth, engages in misconduct by body, speech, and mind. With the breakup of the body, after death, he is reborn in the plane of misery, in a bad destination, in the lower world, in hell. An uninstructed worldling, intoxicated with health, engages in misconduct by body, speech, and mind. With the breakup of the body, after death, he is reborn in the plane of misery, in a bad destination, in the lower world, in hell. An

“Amid such splendor and a delicate life, it occurred to me: 'An uninstructed worldling, though himself subject to old age, not exempt from old age, feels repelled, humiliated, and disgusted when he sees another who is old, overlooking his own situation. Now, I too am subject to old age and am not exempt from old age. Such being the case, if I were to feel repelled, humiliated, and disgusted when seeing another who is old, that would not be proper for me.' When I reflected thus, my intoxication with youth was completely abandoned.

“[Again, it occurred to me:] 'An uninstructed worldling, though himself subject to illness, not exempt from illness, feels repelled, humiliated, and disgusted when he sees another who is ill, overlooking his own situation. Now, I too am subject to illness and am not exempt from illness. Such being the case, if I were to feel repelled, humiliated, and disgusted when seeing another who is ill, that would not be proper for me.' When I reflected thus, my intoxication with health was completely abandoned.

“[Again, it occurred to me:] 'An uninstructed worldling, though himself subject to death, not exempt from death, feels repelled, humiliated, and disgusted when he sees another who has died, overlooking his own situation. Now, I too am subject to death and am not exempt from death. Such being the case, if I were to feel repelled, humiliated, and disgusted when seeing another who has died, that would not be proper for me.' When I reflected thus, my intoxication with life was completely abandoned.

“There are, *bhikkhus*, these three kinds of intoxication. What three: Intoxication of youth, intoxication of health and intoxication of life. An uninstructed worldling, intoxicated with youth, engages in misconduct by body, speech, and mind. With the breakup of the body, after death, he is reborn in the plane of misery, in a bad destination, in the lower world, in hell. An uninstructed worldling, intoxicated with health, engages in misconduct by body, speech, and mind. With the breakup of the body, after death, he is reborn in the plane of misery, in a bad destination, in the lower world, in hell. An

uninstructed worldling, intoxicated with life, engages in misconduct by body, speech, and mind. With the breakup of the body, after death, he is reborn in the plane of misery, in a bad destination, in the lower world, in hell. “Intoxicated with youth, a *bhikkhu* gives up the training and reverts to the lower life; or intoxicated with health, he gives up the training and reverts to the lower life; or intoxicated with life, he gives up the training and reverts to the lower life.”¹²

This admonition of the Buddha is not only for those monks, but is important for all of us and should be repeatedly recollected.

The Four Signs - From Darkness to Light

Once, in the *Dhamma* hall, while the monks were discussing previous lives, the Buddha arrived and asked “Monks, what was the topic that was interrupted with my arrival?” Then, the monks said, “Bhante, we were talking about the previous lives.” The Buddha asked, “Would you like to listen to previous lives?” They all were agreed and then the Buddha revealed the story of the Buddha *Vipassi* who lived ninety-one eons ago. The Buddha then disclosed the stories of the six Buddhās who were born during the last ninety-one eons, namely *Vipassi*, *Sikhî*, *Vessabhu*, *Kakusanda*, *Konâgamana*, and *Kassapa* and finally himself and, for this purpose, delivered a special discourse named the Great Discourse on the Lineage.¹³

According to this discourse, Buddha *Vipassi* was born ninety-one eons ago. Buddha *Sikhi* was born thirty-one eons ago. In that same eon, the Buddha *Vessabhu* was born. In this eon that is known as the great auspicious eon (*Mahâ Bhadra Kalpa*), the Buddha *Kakusanda*, *Konâgamana*, *Kassapa* and *Gotama* were born in the world respectively.

As Our Buddha revealed, the stories of those Buddhās are quite identical. In accordance with that, how the Buddha *Vipassi* witnessed the four signs while he was visiting the

uninstructed worldling, intoxicated with life, engages in misconduct by body, speech, and mind. With the breakup of the body, after death, he is reborn in the plane of misery, in a bad destination, in the lower world, in hell. “Intoxicated with youth, a *bhikkhu* gives up the training and reverts to the lower life; or intoxicated with health, he gives up the training and reverts to the lower life; or intoxicated with life, he gives up the training and reverts to the lower life.”¹²

This admonition of the Buddha is not only for those monks, but is important for all of us and should be repeatedly recollected.

The Four Signs - From Darkness to Light

Once, in the *Dhamma* hall, while the monks were discussing previous lives, the Buddha arrived and asked “Monks, what was the topic that was interrupted with my arrival?” Then, the monks said, “Bhante, we were talking about the previous lives.” The Buddha asked, “Would you like to listen to previous lives?” They all were agreed and then the Buddha revealed the story of the Buddha *Vipassi* who lived ninety-one eons ago. The Buddha then disclosed the stories of the six Buddhās who were born during the last ninety-one eons, namely *Vipassi*, *Sikhî*, *Vessabhu*, *Kakusanda*, *Konâgamana*, and *Kassapa* and finally himself and, for this purpose, delivered a special discourse named the Great Discourse on the Lineage.¹³

According to this discourse, Buddha *Vipassi* was born ninety-one eons ago. Buddha *Sikhi* was born thirty-one eons ago. In that same eon, the Buddha *Vessabhu* was born. In this eon that is known as the great auspicious eon (*Mahâ Bhadra Kalpa*), the Buddha *Kakusanda*, *Konâgamana*, *Kassapa* and *Gotama* were born in the world respectively.

As Our Buddha revealed, the stories of those Buddhās are quite identical. In accordance with that, how the Buddha *Vipassi* witnessed the four signs while he was visiting the

pleasure garden, all other Buddhâs have seen the same four signs as omens before their renunciation of lay life. Those four signs are: (1) an aged person, (2) a sick person, (3) a dead body, and (4) a recluse. Since this is a popular story of the life of the Buddha even among children, we do not intend to spend much time and space for a detailed explanation of that topic here. If you would like to know more details, please read *Digha Nikâya Sutta* No.14.

Great Renunciation and Going Forth - *Lay Life is Full of Dust but Going Forth is Like a Space*

The supreme enlightenment is the greatest fruit of a noble quest. Our Buddha, addressing the monks, delivered a special discourse named *The Noble Quest*. According to this discourse, there are two different quests. They are a noble quest and an ignoble quest.

As the Buddha said in this discourse, being oneself subject to birth, one seeks what is also subject to birth; being oneself subject to aging, one seeks what is also subject to aging; being oneself subject to sickness, one seeks what is also subject to sickness; being oneself subject to death, one seeks what is also subject to death; being oneself subject to sorrow, one seeks what is also subject to sorrow; being oneself subject to defilement, one seeks what is also subject to defilement. That is an ignoble quest.

Here, the nature of birth and death is not clear enough. Let us understand, remember, and make it clear this as Our Buddha himself described. Our Supreme Buddha says, “Wife and children are subject to birth, men and women, slaves, goats and sheep, fowl and pigs, elephants, cattle, horses, and mares, gold and silver are subject to birth. These acquisitions are subject to birth; and one who is tied to these things, infatuated with them, and utterly committed to them; being himself subject to birth, seeks what it also subject to birth.”

Again Buddha says, “Wife and children are subject to aging, men and women, slaves, goats and sheep, fowl and pigs,

pleasure garden, all other Buddhâs have seen the same four signs as omens before their renunciation of lay life. Those four signs are: (1) an aged person, (2) a sick person, (3) a dead body, and (4) a recluse. Since this is a popular story of the life of the Buddha even among children, we do not intend to spend much time and space for a detailed explanation of that topic here. If you would like to know more details, please read *Digha Nikâya Sutta* No.14.

Great Renunciation and Going Forth - *Lay Life is Full of Dust but Going Forth is Like a Space*

The supreme enlightenment is the greatest fruit of a noble quest. Our Buddha, addressing the monks, delivered a special discourse named *The Noble Quest*. According to this discourse, there are two different quests. They are a noble quest and an ignoble quest.

As the Buddha said in this discourse, being oneself subject to birth, one seeks what is also subject to birth; being oneself subject to aging, one seeks what is also subject to aging; being oneself subject to sickness, one seeks what is also subject to sickness; being oneself subject to death, one seeks what is also subject to death; being oneself subject to sorrow, one seeks what is also subject to sorrow; being oneself subject to defilement, one seeks what is also subject to defilement. That is an ignoble quest.

Here, the nature of birth and death is not clear enough. Let us understand, remember, and make it clear this as Our Buddha himself described. Our Supreme Buddha says, “Wife and children are subject to birth, men and women, slaves, goats and sheep, fowl and pigs, elephants, cattle, horses, and mares, gold and silver are subject to birth. These acquisitions are subject to birth; and one who is tied to these things, infatuated with them, and utterly committed to them; being himself subject to birth, seeks what it also subject to birth.”

Again Buddha says, “Wife and children are subject to aging, men and women, slaves, goats and sheep, fowl and pigs,

elephants, cattle, horses, and mares, gold and silver are subject to aging. These acquisitions are subject to aging and one who is tied to these things, infatuated with them, and utterly committed to them; being himself subject to aging, seeks what is also subject to aging.”

In this manner, after having explained in details the nature of birth, aging, sickness, death, sorrow and defilement, the Buddha then taught us what is called the Noble Search. Being oneself subject to birth, having understood the danger in what is subject to birth, one seeks the unborn supreme security from bondage, *Nibbâna*; being oneself subject to aging, having understood the danger in what is subject to aging, one seeks the un-aging supreme security from bondage, *Nibbâna*; being oneself subject to sickness, having understood the danger in what is subject to sickness, one seeks the un-ailing supreme security from bondage, *Nibbâna*; being oneself subject to death, having understood the danger in what is subject to death, one seeks the deathless supreme security from bondage, *Nibbâna*; being oneself subject to sorrow, having understood the danger in what is subject to sorrow, one seeks the sorrowless supreme security from bondage, *Nibbâna*; being oneself subject to defilement, having understood the danger in what is subject to defilement, one seeks the undefiled supreme security from bondage, *Nibbâna*. This is the Noble Search.”

According to this discourse, having contemplated upon these two ways of searching, the unenlightened *Bodhisatta* understood the danger in what is subject to aging, sickness, death, sorrow, and defilement and the importance of seeking the state of un-aging, un-ailing, deathless, sorrowless, and undefiled supreme security from bondage, *Nibbâna*. Thereafter, he renounced his worldly life and went forth in search of what is wholesome (*kim kusala gavesi*) and finally went to *Alâra Kâlâma*.

The Buddha says, “Later, while still young, a black-haired young man endowed with the blessing of youth, in the prime of life, though my mother and father wished otherwise

elephants, cattle, horses, and mares, gold and silver are subject to aging. These acquisitions are subject to aging and one who is tied to these things, infatuated with them, and utterly committed to them; being himself subject to aging, seeks what is also subject to aging.”

In this manner, after having explained in details the nature of birth, aging, sickness, death, sorrow and defilement, the Buddha then taught us what is called the Noble Search. Being oneself subject to birth, having understood the danger in what is subject to birth, one seeks the unborn supreme security from bondage, *Nibbâna*; being oneself subject to aging, having understood the danger in what is subject to aging, one seeks the un-aging supreme security from bondage, *Nibbâna*; being oneself subject to sickness, having understood the danger in what is subject to sickness, one seeks the un-ailing supreme security from bondage, *Nibbâna*; being oneself subject to death, having understood the danger in what is subject to death, one seeks the deathless supreme security from bondage, *Nibbâna*; being oneself subject to sorrow, having understood the danger in what is subject to sorrow, one seeks the sorrowless supreme security from bondage, *Nibbâna*; being oneself subject to defilement, having understood the danger in what is subject to defilement, one seeks the undefiled supreme security from bondage, *Nibbâna*. This is the Noble Search.”

According to this discourse, having contemplated upon these two ways of searching, the unenlightened *Bodhisatta* understood the danger in what is subject to aging, sickness, death, sorrow, and defilement and the importance of seeking the state of un-aging, un-ailing, deathless, sorrowless, and undefiled supreme security from bondage, *Nibbâna*. Thereafter, he renounced his worldly life and went forth in search of what is wholesome (*kim kusala gavesi*) and finally went to *Alâra Kâlâma*.

The Buddha says, “Later, while still young, a black-haired young man endowed with the blessing of youth, in the prime of life, though my mother and father wished otherwise

and wept with tearful faces, I shaved off my hair and beard, put on the yellow robe, and went forth from the home life into homelessness. Having gone forth, Monks, in search of what is wholesome, seeking the supreme state of sublime peace, I went to *Alāra Kālāma* and said to him: “Friend *Kālāma*, I want to lead the holy life in this Dhamma and Discipline.”¹⁴

This is how Our Buddha himself tells us how he renounced his worldly life while still a young man. In this manner, the Buddha also explained this to *Saccaka*, the Debater, how he renounced the worldly life. This account is given in the *Greater Discourse to Saccaka* of *The Middle Length Sayings of the Buddha* as follows. “Here, *Aggivessana*, before my enlightenment, while I was still only an unenlightened *Bodhisatta*, I thought: 'Household life is crowded and dusty; life gone forth is wide open. It is not easy, while living in a home, to lead the holy life utterly perfect and pure as a polished shell. Suppose I shave off my hair and beard, put on the yellow robe, and go forth from the home life into homelessness. Later, while still young, a black-haired young man endowed with the blessing of youth, in the prime of life...”¹⁵

In accordance with these explanations in the original discourses of the Buddha, we can clearly understand how the Buddha renounced his worldly life and went forth. This is the very word of the Buddha.

As the early discourses reveal, after his renunciation and going forth, he dwelt near the mount *Pândava*. We can understand many things about the first days of his monastic life from the *Going Forth Sutta* of the *Sutta Nipâta*, such as how he went to collect alms, how he met King *Bimbisâra*, and the king's request from the recluse *Siddhârtha*.

According to this *sutta*, it is said that having understood the household life as crowded and dusty and the life of gone forth as wide open, the *Bodhisatta* went forth. After his going forth, first he refrained from three unwholesome bodily actions and four unwholesome verbal actions. In this manner, he purified his livelihood. He went to collect alms from

and wept with tearful faces, I shaved off my hair and beard, put on the yellow robe, and went forth from the home life into homelessness. Having gone forth, Monks, in search of what is wholesome, seeking the supreme state of sublime peace, I went to *Alāra Kālāma* and said to him: “Friend *Kālāma*, I want to lead the holy life in this Dhamma and Discipline.”¹⁴

This is how Our Buddha himself tells us how he renounced his worldly life while still a young man. In this manner, the Buddha also explained this to *Saccaka*, the Debater, how he renounced the worldly life. This account is given in the *Greater Discourse to Saccaka* of *The Middle Length Sayings of the Buddha* as follows. “Here, *Aggivessana*, before my enlightenment, while I was still only an unenlightened *Bodhisatta*, I thought: 'Household life is crowded and dusty; life gone forth is wide open. It is not easy, while living in a home, to lead the holy life utterly perfect and pure as a polished shell. Suppose I shave off my hair and beard, put on the yellow robe, and go forth from the home life into homelessness. Later, while still young, a black-haired young man endowed with the blessing of youth, in the prime of life...”¹⁵

In accordance with these explanations in the original discourses of the Buddha, we can clearly understand how the Buddha renounced his worldly life and went forth. This is the very word of the Buddha.

As the early discourses reveal, after his renunciation and going forth, he dwelt near the mount *Pândava*. We can understand many things about the first days of his monastic life from the *Going Forth Sutta* of the *Sutta Nipâta*, such as how he went to collect alms, how he met King *Bimbisâra*, and the king's request from the recluse *Siddhârtha*.

According to this *sutta*, it is said that having understood the household life as crowded and dusty and the life of gone forth as wide open, the *Bodhisatta* went forth. After his going forth, first he refrained from three unwholesome bodily actions and four unwholesome verbal actions. In this manner, he purified his livelihood. He went to collect alms from

Rājagaha of *Magadha*. King *Bimbisāra* standing in the balcony of the palace saw the composed demeanor of this newly ordained recluse. Having seen him, the king said to others, “Look at this one, sirs, how handsome, stately, pure! How consummate his demeanor!: Mindful, his eyes downcast, looking only a yoke-length before him, as one who's not from a lowly lineage.” The King then sent the royal messengers at once to see where this monk would go. The royal messengers followed after him inquiring where he was going. Thus, well restrained, well composed, and mindful, our *Bodhisatta's* bowl was filled while going from house to house continuously.

Having collected alms, the sage departed from the city and reached his dwelling of the mount *Pāṇḍava*. Having seen this, the royal messengers went there and one messenger came to the King and said, “That monk, your majesty, on the east side of *Pāṇḍava* lives like a tiger, a bull, or a lion.” On hearing this, the King went to the mount *Pāṇḍava*. Having gone there, the King had a discussion with the sage. The King said, “You are only a young man, sir, a lad in the prime of your life. You are handsome and shapely. You appear to be a prince of noble birth. Adorning a splendid army headed by tuskers, esteemed by a council of nobles, enjoy wealth which I can bestow upon you. However, can you please tell me what family you're from?”

Then, our *Bodhisatta* said, “King, not far from *Himavant*, the Snowland, there is a country called *Kosala*. The people of *Kosala* are rich and they are strong. They come from the race of the Sun and their family name is *Sākya*. That was the people I left when I walked away from the wish and the longing for pleasure. Having seen the miseries of pleasure, I have seen the security involved in renouncing them;

So now I will go-
I will go on into the struggle,
This is to my mind delight;
This is where my mind finds bliss.”¹⁶

Rājagaha of *Magadha*. King *Bimbisāra* standing in the balcony of the palace saw the composed demeanor of this newly ordained recluse. Having seen him, the king said to others, “Look at this one, sirs, how handsome, stately, pure! How consummate his demeanor!: Mindful, his eyes downcast, looking only a yoke-length before him, as one who's not from a lowly lineage.” The King then sent the royal messengers at once to see where this monk would go. The royal messengers followed after him inquiring where he was going. Thus, well restrained, well composed, and mindful, our *Bodhisatta's* bowl was filled while going from house to house continuously.

Having collected alms, the sage departed from the city and reached his dwelling of the mount *Pāṇḍava*. Having seen this, the royal messengers went there and one messenger came to the King and said, “That monk, your majesty, on the east side of *Pāṇḍava* lives like a tiger, a bull, or a lion.” On hearing this, the King went to the mount *Pāṇḍava*. Having gone there, the King had a discussion with the sage. The King said, “You are only a young man, sir, a lad in the prime of your life. You are handsome and shapely. You appear to be a prince of noble birth. Adorning a splendid army headed by tuskers, esteemed by a council of nobles, enjoy wealth which I can bestow upon you. However, can you please tell me what family you're from?”

Then, our *Bodhisatta* said, “King, not far from *Himavant*, the Snowland, there is a country called *Kosala*. The people of *Kosala* are rich and they are strong. They come from the race of the Sun and their family name is *Sākya*. That was the people I left when I walked away from the wish and the longing for pleasure. Having seen the miseries of pleasure, I have seen the security involved in renouncing them;

So now I will go-
I will go on into the struggle,
This is to my mind delight;
This is where my mind finds bliss.”¹⁶

In Search of Truth

Among the *Jhânic* Teachers- *I Learned Quickly, As Far as Mere Lip-Reciting*

As we have mentioned above, Our Buddha as an unenlightened aspirant Buddha, in his youthful prime, while his parents were weeping and crying, having shaved his head and beard, and having donned the saffron robe, went from home to the state of homeless life. Then, in search of truth, he went to meet different teachers. The first teacher that he went to meet was *Alâra Kâlâma* who was one of the most renowned and special teachers in India at that time. A large retinue of disciples accompanied *Alâra*. He had developed all the four material *jhânas* and attained the first three immaterial attainments namely: the state of infinitude of space (*âkâsânañcâyatana*), the state of infinitude of consciousness (*viññânañcâyatana*), and the state of nothingness (*âkiñcaññâyatana*).

Let us now understand the experience that our *Bodhisatta, Siddhârtha* gained from this teacher. After approaching *Alâra Kâlâma*, the ascetic *Siddhârtha* said that he would like to follow his Dhamma and Discipline. Then, *Kâlâma* expressed his willingness to accept *Siddhartha* as a disciple, and explained his teaching, saying, “This Dhamma is such that a wise man like you can soon enter upon and abide in it realizing through direct knowledge.”

Later, while teaching the Dhamma to the Buddha's disciples, he explained his ability to understand things as quickly as he heard the lip-reciting. The Buddha said, "I quickly learned that Dhamma... I considered that it is not through mere faith alone that *Alârâ Kâlâma* declares. Certainly, *Alârâ Kâlâma* abides knowing and seeing this Dhamma." Then, I went to *Alârâ Kâlâma* and asked him: 'Friend *Kâlâma*, in what way do you declare that by realizing for yourself with direct knowledge you enter upon and abide in this Dhamma?' In reply, he declared the base of nothingness (*âkiñcaññâyatana*).

In Search of Truth

Among the *Jhânic* Teachers- *I Learned Quickly, As Far as Mere Lip-Reciting*

As we have mentioned above, Our Buddha as an unenlightened aspirant Buddha, in his youthful prime, while his parents were weeping and crying, having shaved his head and beard, and having donned the saffron robe, went from home to the state of homeless life. Then, in search of truth, he went to meet different teachers. The first teacher that he went to meet was *Alâra Kâlâma* who was one of the most renowned and special teachers in India at that time. A large retinue of disciples accompanied *Alâra*. He had developed all the four material *jhânas* and attained the first three immaterial attainments namely: the state of infinitude of space (*âkâsânañcâyatana*), the state of infinitude of consciousness (*viññânañcâyatana*), and the state of nothingness (*âkiñcaññâyatana*).

Let us now understand the experience that our *Bodhisatta, Siddhârtha* gained from this teacher. After approaching *Alâra Kâlâma*, the ascetic *Siddhârtha* said that he would like to follow his Dhamma and Discipline. Then, *Kâlâma* expressed his willingness to accept *Siddhartha* as a disciple, and explained his teaching, saying, “This Dhamma is such that a wise man like you can soon enter upon and abide in it realizing through direct knowledge.”

Later, while teaching the Dhamma to the Buddha's disciples, he explained his ability to understand things as quickly as he heard the lip-reciting. The Buddha said, "I quickly learned that Dhamma... I considered that it is not through mere faith alone that *Alârâ Kâlâma* declares. Certainly, *Alârâ Kâlâma* abides knowing and seeing this Dhamma." Then, I went to *Alârâ Kâlâma* and asked him: 'Friend *Kâlâma*, in what way do you declare that by realizing for yourself with direct knowledge you enter upon and abide in this Dhamma?' In reply, he declared the base of nothingness (*âkiñcaññâyatana*).

On that occasion, the *Bodhisatta Siddhârtha* contemplated: “Not only *Alârâ Kâlâma* has faith, energy, mindfulness, concentration, and wisdom. I too have faith, energy, mindfulness, concentration, and wisdom.” He determined “As *Alârâ Kâlâma* says that he has entered and abides this Dhamma, I too should strive to enter and abide this Dhamma. As such, he soon entered upon and abode in that Dhamma by realizing it for himself with direct knowledge.

After realizing his Dhamma quickly, the *Bodhisatta Siddhârtha* went to *Alâra Kâlâma* and said that he realized the Dhamma. Then, *Alâra Kâlâma* being so delighted said, “The Dhamma that I declare I enter upon and abide in by realizing for myself with direct knowledge is the Dhamma that you enter upon and abide in by realizing for yourself with direct knowledge. So you know the Dhamma that I know and I know the Dhamma that you know. As I am, so are you; as you are, so am I. Come, friend, let us now lead this community together.” Thus, he was praised and honored by *Kâlâma*. However, since it was not the aim of our *Bodhisatta*, he considered, “This Dhamma does not lead to disenchantment, to dispassion, to cessation, to peace, to direct knowledge, to enlightenment, to *Nibbâna*, but only to reappearance in the base of nothingness.” In such a way, having understood that his teaching extended only to the third immaterial attainment, the state of nothingness, not being satisfied with that Dhamma and being disappointed with it; he left the teacher, *Alâra Kâlâma*.

Thereafter, our *Bodhisatta* went to *Uddaka Râmaputta*. He was also a well-known teacher in India at that time. He had developed one step further than *Alârâ Kâlâma*. This means, he had attained all material and immaterial attainments, the last one being neither perception-nor-non-perception. As he did with *Alârâ Kâlâma*, our *Bodhisatta* came to this teacher and said that he would like to follow his Dhamma and Discipline. Then, he said, “The venerable one may stay here. This Dhamma is such that a wise man can soon realize and abide in it.”

On that occasion, the *Bodhisatta Siddhârtha* contemplated: “Not only *Alârâ Kâlâma* has faith, energy, mindfulness, concentration, and wisdom. I too have faith, energy, mindfulness, concentration, and wisdom.” He determined “As *Alârâ Kâlâma* says that he has entered and abides this Dhamma, I too should strive to enter and abide this Dhamma. As such, he soon entered upon and abode in that Dhamma by realizing it for himself with direct knowledge.

After realizing his Dhamma quickly, the *Bodhisatta Siddhârtha* went to *Alâra Kâlâma* and said that he realized the Dhamma. Then, *Alâra Kâlâma* being so delighted said, “The Dhamma that I declare I enter upon and abide in by realizing for myself with direct knowledge is the Dhamma that you enter upon and abide in by realizing for yourself with direct knowledge. So you know the Dhamma that I know and I know the Dhamma that you know. As I am, so are you; as you are, so am I. Come, friend, let us now lead this community together.” Thus, he was praised and honored by *Kâlâma*. However, since it was not the aim of our *Bodhisatta*, he considered, “This Dhamma does not lead to disenchantment, to dispassion, to cessation, to peace, to direct knowledge, to enlightenment, to *Nibbâna*, but only to reappearance in the base of nothingness.” In such a way, having understood that his teaching extended only to the third immaterial attainment, the state of nothingness, not being satisfied with that Dhamma and being disappointed with it; he left the teacher, *Alâra Kâlâma*.

Thereafter, our *Bodhisatta* went to *Uddaka Râmaputta*. He was also a well-known teacher in India at that time. He had developed one step further than *Alârâ Kâlâma*. This means, he had attained all material and immaterial attainments, the last one being neither perception-nor-non-perception. As he did with *Alârâ Kâlâma*, our *Bodhisatta* came to this teacher and said that he would like to follow his Dhamma and Discipline. Then, he said, “The venerable one may stay here. This Dhamma is such that a wise man can soon realize and abide in it.”

Here also, as earlier, our *Bodhisatta* realized the teaching as quickly, as far as mere lip-reciting. He practiced meditation and contemplated, "Not only *Râma* has faith, energy, mindfulness, concentration, and wisdom. I too have faith, energy, mindfulness, concentration, and wisdom." Thus, he developed and cultivated five faculties and five mental powers. As such, within a very short time, he realized the state of neither-perception-nor-non-perception and then he met *Uddaka Râmaputta* and declared that he experienced that state. *Uddaka*, like *Alâra Kâlâma*, gave our *Bodhisatta* the position of a teacher and honored him with the suggestion that he led the community. However, as it was not his aim and having understood that it does not lead to disenchantment, to dispassion, to cessation, to peace, to direct knowledge, to enlightenment, to *Nibbâna*, but only to reappearance in the base of neither-perception-nor-non-perception. Being dissatisfied and disappointed with that Dhamma, he left *Uddaka* too.

In this manner, after his going forth, seeking the supreme state of sublime peace, wandering by stages through *Magadha* country, he met these two teachers and developed his mind up to the state of neither-perception-nor-non-perception. We come across this account in several discourses in *The Middle Length Sayings of the Buddha*, such as *The Noble Search: Ariyapareyesana Sutta*, *The Greater Discourse to Saccaka: Mahâ Saccaka Sutta*, the *To Prince Bodhi: Bodhirâja kumâra Sutta*, and the *To Sangârava: Sangârava Sutta*.

Practicing Austerity in the Midst of the Great Woods- Unparalleled Vanquisher

According to the *To Sangârava Sutta* of *The Middle Length Sayings of the Buddha*, before his supreme enlightenment, as an unenlightened *Bodhisatta*, he realized the absence of the supreme peace of *Nibbâna* in the teachings of *Alâra Kâlâma* and *Uddaka Râmaputta*. As he was leaving them, three similes occurred to him spontaneously, which were unheard of before. This is how the Buddha explained those

Here also, as earlier, our *Bodhisatta* realized the teaching as quickly, as far as mere lip-reciting. He practiced meditation and contemplated, "Not only *Râma* has faith, energy, mindfulness, concentration, and wisdom. I too have faith, energy, mindfulness, concentration, and wisdom." Thus, he developed and cultivated five faculties and five mental powers. As such, within a very short time, he realized the state of neither-perception-nor-non-perception and then he met *Uddaka Râmaputta* and declared that he experienced that state. *Uddaka*, like *Alâra Kâlâma*, gave our *Bodhisatta* the position of a teacher and honored him with the suggestion that he led the community. However, as it was not his aim and having understood that it does not lead to disenchantment, to dispassion, to cessation, to peace, to direct knowledge, to enlightenment, to *Nibbâna*, but only to reappearance in the base of neither-perception-nor-non-perception. Being dissatisfied and disappointed with that Dhamma, he left *Uddaka* too.

In this manner, after his going forth, seeking the supreme state of sublime peace, wandering by stages through *Magadha* country, he met these two teachers and developed his mind up to the state of neither-perception-nor-non-perception. We come across this account in several discourses in *The Middle Length Sayings of the Buddha*, such as *The Noble Search: Ariyapareyesana Sutta*, *The Greater Discourse to Saccaka: Mahâ Saccaka Sutta*, the *To Prince Bodhi: Bodhirâja kumâra Sutta*, and the *To Sangârava: Sangârava Sutta*.

Practicing Austerity in the Midst of the Great Woods- Unparalleled Vanquisher

According to the *To Sangârava Sutta* of *The Middle Length Sayings of the Buddha*, before his supreme enlightenment, as an unenlightened *Bodhisatta*, he realized the absence of the supreme peace of *Nibbâna* in the teachings of *Alâra Kâlâma* and *Uddaka Râmaputta*. As he was leaving them, three similes occurred to him spontaneously, which were unheard of before. This is how the Buddha explained those

three similes on a later occasion.

Suppose, there were a wet sappy piece of wood lying in water, and a man came with an upper fire-stick, thinking: 'I shall light a fire, I shall produce heat.'

Suppose, there were a wet sappy piece of wood lying on dry land far from water, and a man came with an upper fire-stick, thinking: 'I shall light a fire, I shall produce heat.'

Suppose, there were a dry sapless piece of wood lying on dry land far from water, and a man came with an upper fire-stick, thinking: 'I shall light a fire, I shall produce heat.'

Of the three similes, in accordance with the first one what he realized was that there were some recluses and *brahmins* who still did not live bodily withdrawn from sensual pleasures, and whose sensual desire, affection, infatuation, thirst, and fever for sensual pleasures had not been fully abandoned and suppressed internally. Even if those good recluses and *brahmins* feel painful, racking, piercing feelings due to exertion, they were incapable of knowledge and vision and supreme enlightenment.

According to the second simile, there were some recluses and *brahmins* who lived bodily withdrawn from sensual pleasures, but whose sensual desire, affection, infatuation, thirst, and fever for sensual pleasures has not been fully abandoned and suppressed internally. Even if those good recluses and *brahmins* feel painful, racking, piercing feelings due to exertion, they are also incapable of knowledge and vision and supreme enlightenment.

According to the third simile, there were some recluses and *brahmins* who lived bodily withdrawn from sensual pleasures, and whose sensual desire, affection, infatuation, thirst, and fever for sensual pleasures has been fully abandoned and suppressed internally, even if those good recluses and *brahmins* feel painful, racking, piercing feelings due to exertion, they are capable of knowledge and vision and supreme enlightenment.

three similes on a later occasion.

Suppose, there were a wet sappy piece of wood lying in water, and a man came with an upper fire-stick, thinking: 'I shall light a fire, I shall produce heat.'

Suppose, there were a wet sappy piece of wood lying on dry land far from water, and a man came with an upper fire-stick, thinking: 'I shall light a fire, I shall produce heat.'

Suppose, there were a dry sapless piece of wood lying on dry land far from water, and a man came with an upper fire-stick, thinking: 'I shall light a fire, I shall produce heat.'

Of the three similes, in accordance with the first one what he realized was that there were some recluses and *brahmins* who still did not live bodily withdrawn from sensual pleasures, and whose sensual desire, affection, infatuation, thirst, and fever for sensual pleasures had not been fully abandoned and suppressed internally. Even if those good recluses and *brahmins* feel painful, racking, piercing feelings due to exertion, they were incapable of knowledge and vision and supreme enlightenment.

According to the second simile, there were some recluses and *brahmins* who lived bodily withdrawn from sensual pleasures, but whose sensual desire, affection, infatuation, thirst, and fever for sensual pleasures has not been fully abandoned and suppressed internally. Even if those good recluses and *brahmins* feel painful, racking, piercing feelings due to exertion, they are also incapable of knowledge and vision and supreme enlightenment.

According to the third simile, there were some recluses and *brahmins* who lived bodily withdrawn from sensual pleasures, and whose sensual desire, affection, infatuation, thirst, and fever for sensual pleasures has been fully abandoned and suppressed internally, even if those good recluses and *brahmins* feel painful, racking, piercing feelings due to exertion, they are capable of knowledge and vision and supreme enlightenment.

Thus, our *Bodhisatta* having realized these three similes, decided to practice with full exertion. The Buddha explained this to the *Sangârava* as follows.

“*Bhâradvâja*, I thought 'Suppose, with my teeth clenched and my tongue pressed against the roof of my mouth, I beat down, constrain, and crush mind with mind.' So, with my teeth clenched and my tongue pressed against the roof of my mouth, I beat down, constrained, and crushed mind with mind. While I did so, sweat ran from my armpits. Just as a strong man might seize a weaker man by the head or shoulders and beat him down, constrain him, and crush him, so too, with my teeth clenched and my tongue pressed against the roof of my mouth, I beat down, constrained, and crushed mind with mind, and sweat ran from my armpits. But although tireless energy was aroused in me and unremitting mindfulness was established, my body was overwrought and uncalm because I was exhausted by the painful striving. But such painful feeling that arose in me did not invade my mind and remain.

“*Bhâradvâja*, I thought: 'Suppose I practice the breathing less meditation.' So I stopped the in-breaths and out-breaths through my mouth and nose. While I did so, there was a loud sound of winds coming out from my ear-holes. Just as there is a loud sound when a smith's bellows are blown, so too, while I stopped the in-breaths and out-breaths through my nose and ears, there was a loud sound of winds coming out from my ear-holes. But although tireless energy was aroused in me and unremitting mindfulness was established, my body was overwrought and uncalm because I was exhausted by the painful striving. But such painful feeling that arose in me did not invade my mind and remain.

“*Bhâradvâja*, I thought: 'Suppose I practice further the breathing less meditation.' So I stopped the in-breaths and out-breaths through my mouth, nose, and ears. While I did so, violent winds cut through my head. Just as if a strong man were to crush my head with the tip of a sharp sword, so too, while I stopped the in-breaths and out-breaths through my

Thus, our *Bodhisatta* having realized these three similes, decided to practice with full exertion. The Buddha explained this to the *Sangârava* as follows.

“*Bhâradvâja*, I thought 'Suppose, with my teeth clenched and my tongue pressed against the roof of my mouth, I beat down, constrain, and crush mind with mind.' So, with my teeth clenched and my tongue pressed against the roof of my mouth, I beat down, constrained, and crushed mind with mind. While I did so, sweat ran from my armpits. Just as a strong man might seize a weaker man by the head or shoulders and beat him down, constrain him, and crush him, so too, with my teeth clenched and my tongue pressed against the roof of my mouth, I beat down, constrained, and crushed mind with mind, and sweat ran from my armpits. But although tireless energy was aroused in me and unremitting mindfulness was established, my body was overwrought and uncalm because I was exhausted by the painful striving. But such painful feeling that arose in me did not invade my mind and remain.

“*Bhâradvâja*, I thought: 'Suppose I practice the breathing less meditation.' So I stopped the in-breaths and out-breaths through my mouth and nose. While I did so, there was a loud sound of winds coming out from my ear-holes. Just as there is a loud sound when a smith's bellows are blown, so too, while I stopped the in-breaths and out-breaths through my nose and ears, there was a loud sound of winds coming out from my ear-holes. But although tireless energy was aroused in me and unremitting mindfulness was established, my body was overwrought and uncalm because I was exhausted by the painful striving. But such painful feeling that arose in me did not invade my mind and remain.

“*Bhâradvâja*, I thought: 'Suppose I practice further the breathing less meditation.' So I stopped the in-breaths and out-breaths through my mouth, nose, and ears. While I did so, violent winds cut through my head. Just as if a strong man were to crush my head with the tip of a sharp sword, so too, while I stopped the in-breaths and out-breaths through my

mouth, nose, and ears, violent winds cut through my head. But although tireless energy was aroused in me and unremitting mindfulness was established, my body was overwrought and uncalm because I was exhausted by the painful striving. But such painful feeling that arose in me did not invade my mind and remain.

“*Bhâradvâja*, I thought: 'Suppose I practice further the breathing less meditation.' So I stopped the in-breaths and out-breaths through my mouth, nose, and ears. While I did so, there were violent pains in my head. Just as if a strong man were tightening a tough leather strap around my head as a headband, so too, while I stopped the in-breaths and out-breaths through my mouth, nose, and ears, there were violent pains in my head. But although tireless energy was aroused in me and unremitting mindfulness was established, my body was overwrought and uncalm because I was exhausted by the painful striving. But such painful feeling that arose in me did not invade my mind and remain.

“*Bhâradvâja*, I thought: 'Suppose I practice further the breathingless meditation.' So I stopped the in-breaths and out-breaths through my mouth, nose, and ears. While I did so, violent winds carved up my belly. Just as if a skilled butcher or his apprentice were to carve up an ox's belly with a sharp butcher's knife, so too, while I stopped the in-breaths and out-breaths through my mouth, nose, and ears, violent winds carved up my belly. But although tireless energy was aroused in me and unremitting mindfulness was established, my body was overwrought and uncalm because I was exhausted by the painful striving. But such painful feeling that arose in me did not invade my mind and remain.

“*Bhâradvâja*, I thought: 'Suppose I practice further the breathingless meditation.' So I stopped the in-breaths and out-breaths through my mouth, nose, and ears. While I did so, there was a violent burning in my body. Just as if two strong men were to seize a weaker man by both arms and roast him over a pit of hot coals, so too, while I stopped the in-breaths and out-breaths through my mouth, nose, and ears, there was

mouth, nose, and ears, violent winds cut through my head. But although tireless energy was aroused in me and unremitting mindfulness was established, my body was overwrought and uncalm because I was exhausted by the painful striving. But such painful feeling that arose in me did not invade my mind and remain.

“*Bhâradvâja*, I thought: 'Suppose I practice further the breathing less meditation.' So I stopped the in-breaths and out-breaths through my mouth, nose, and ears. While I did so, there were violent pains in my head. Just as if a strong man were tightening a tough leather strap around my head as a headband, so too, while I stopped the in-breaths and out-breaths through my mouth, nose, and ears, there were violent pains in my head. But although tireless energy was aroused in me and unremitting mindfulness was established, my body was overwrought and uncalm because I was exhausted by the painful striving. But such painful feeling that arose in me did not invade my mind and remain.

“*Bhâradvâja*, I thought: 'Suppose I practice further the breathingless meditation.' So I stopped the in-breaths and out-breaths through my mouth, nose, and ears. While I did so, violent winds carved up my belly. Just as if a skilled butcher or his apprentice were to carve up an ox's belly with a sharp butcher's knife, so too, while I stopped the in-breaths and out-breaths through my mouth, nose, and ears, violent winds carved up my belly. But although tireless energy was aroused in me and unremitting mindfulness was established, my body was overwrought and uncalm because I was exhausted by the painful striving. But such painful feeling that arose in me did not invade my mind and remain.

“*Bhâradvâja*, I thought: 'Suppose I practice further the breathingless meditation.' So I stopped the in-breaths and out-breaths through my mouth, nose, and ears. While I did so, there was a violent burning in my body. Just as if two strong men were to seize a weaker man by both arms and roast him over a pit of hot coals, so too, while I stopped the in-breaths and out-breaths through my mouth, nose, and ears, there was

a violent burning in my body. But although tireless energy was aroused in me and unremitting mindfulness was established, my body was overwrought and uncalm because I was exhausted by the painful striving. But such painful feeling that arose in me did not invade my mind and remain.

“Now, “*Bhâradvâja*, when deities saw me, some said: 'The recluse *Gotama* is dead.' Other deities said: 'The recluse *Gotama* is not dead, he is dying.' And other deities said: 'The recluse *Gotama* is not dead nor dying; he is an *arahant*, for such is the way *arahants* abide.’

“*Bhâradvâja*, I thought: 'Suppose I practice entirely cutting off food.' Then deities came to me and said: 'Good sir, do not practice entirely cutting off food. If you do so, we shall infuse heavenly food into the pores of your skin and you will live on that.' I considered: 'If I claim to be completely fasting while these deities infuse heavenly food into the pores of my skin and I live on that, then I shall be lying.' So I dismissed those deities, saying: 'There is no need' and survived with little food.”

Likewise, Our Buddha practiced many different kinds of austerities before he attained enlightenment. He comprehended that it was not the way to realize the four Noble Truths. Finally, as the Buddha later disclosed in the *Mahâ Sihanâda Sutta*, *The Greater Discourse to Saccaka: Mahâ Saccaka Sutta*, and *To Sangârava Sutta* of *The Middle Length Sayings of the Buddha*, he started to take enough food, little by little, eventually, following the Middle Way.

During the time of austerity, as he had eaten only very little food, his body reached a state of extreme emaciation. His limbs became like the jointed segments of vine stems or bamboo stems. His backside became like a camel's hoof. His spine stood forth like corded beads and ribs jutted out as gaunt as the crazy rafters of an old roofless barn. His eyes sank into their sockets losing their gleam like water that has sunk far down in a deep well. His scalp shriveled and withered as a green bitter gourd shrivels and withers in the wind and sun.

a violent burning in my body. But although tireless energy was aroused in me and unremitting mindfulness was established, my body was overwrought and uncalm because I was exhausted by the painful striving. But such painful feeling that arose in me did not invade my mind and remain.

“Now, “*Bhâradvâja*, when deities saw me, some said: 'The recluse *Gotama* is dead.' Other deities said: 'The recluse *Gotama* is not dead, he is dying.' And other deities said: 'The recluse *Gotama* is not dead nor dying; he is an *arahant*, for such is the way *arahants* abide.’

“*Bhâradvâja*, I thought: 'Suppose I practice entirely cutting off food.' Then deities came to me and said: 'Good sir, do not practice entirely cutting off food. If you do so, we shall infuse heavenly food into the pores of your skin and you will live on that.' I considered: 'If I claim to be completely fasting while these deities infuse heavenly food into the pores of my skin and I live on that, then I shall be lying.' So I dismissed those deities, saying: 'There is no need' and survived with little food.”

Likewise, Our Buddha practiced many different kinds of austerities before he attained enlightenment. He comprehended that it was not the way to realize the four Noble Truths. Finally, as the Buddha later disclosed in the *Mahâ Sihanâda Sutta*, *The Greater Discourse to Saccaka: Mahâ Saccaka Sutta*, and *To Sangârava Sutta* of *The Middle Length Sayings of the Buddha*, he started to take enough food, little by little, eventually, following the Middle Way.

During the time of austerity, as he had eaten only very little food, his body reached a state of extreme emaciation. His limbs became like the jointed segments of vine stems or bamboo stems. His backside became like a camel's hoof. His spine stood forth like corded beads and ribs jutted out as gaunt as the crazy rafters of an old roofless barn. His eyes sank into their sockets losing their gleam like water that has sunk far down in a deep well. His scalp shriveled and withered as a green bitter gourd shrivels and withers in the wind and sun.

As the Buddha himself described it, his belly skin adhered to his backbone; thus, whenever he touched his belly skin, he encountered his backbone. Whenever he touched his backbone, he encountered his belly skin. While he defecated or urinated, he fell over on his face. When he tried to ease his body by rubbing his limbs with his hands, the hair, rotted at its roots, fell from his body. Having seen him some people said, “The recluse *Gotama* is black.” Other people said, “The recluse *Gotama* is not black, he is brown.” Other people said, “The recluse *Gotama* is neither black nor brown, he is golden-skinned.” Still others said, “The recluse *Gotama* is fair skinned.”

The Buddha, addressing the *Bhâradvâja Sangârava* says, “*Bhâradvâja*, I thought whatever recluses or *brahmins* in the past have experienced painful, racking, piercing feelings due to exertion, this is the utmost, there is none beyond this. And whatever recluses and *brahmins* in the future will experience painful, racking, piercing feelings due to exertion, this is the utmost, there is none beyond this. And whatever recluses and *brahmins* at present experience painful, racking, piercing feelings due to exertion, this is the utmost, there is none beyond this. But by this racking practice of austerities I have not attained any superhuman states, any distinction in knowledge and vision worthy of the noble ones. Could there be another path to enlightenment?”

In Search of the Bliss of Dhamma Through the Middle Path - *The Right Decision*

Let us now learn how the Buddha himself revealed how he entered the Middle Path after futile practices of different kinds of austerities. The Buddha said to *Sangârava*, “*Bhâradvâja*, I recall that when my father the *Sâkyan* was occupied, while I was sitting in the cool shade of a rose-apple tree, quite secluded from sensual pleasures, secluded from unwholesome states, I entered upon and abided in the first *jhâna*, which is accompanied by applied and sustained thought, with rapture and pleasure born of seclusion. Could that be the path to enlightenment?’ Then, following on that memory a realization arose in me, ‘That is indeed the path to enlightenment.’

As the Buddha himself described it, his belly skin adhered to his backbone; thus, whenever he touched his belly skin, he encountered his backbone. Whenever he touched his backbone, he encountered his belly skin. While he defecated or urinated, he fell over on his face. When he tried to ease his body by rubbing his limbs with his hands, the hair, rotted at its roots, fell from his body. Having seen him some people said, “The recluse *Gotama* is black.” Other people said, “The recluse *Gotama* is not black, he is brown.” Other people said, “The recluse *Gotama* is neither black nor brown, he is golden-skinned.” Still others said, “The recluse *Gotama* is fair skinned.”

The Buddha, addressing the *Bhâradvâja Sangârava* says, “*Bhâradvâja*, I thought whatever recluses or *brahmins* in the past have experienced painful, racking, piercing feelings due to exertion, this is the utmost, there is none beyond this. And whatever recluses and *brahmins* in the future will experience painful, racking, piercing feelings due to exertion, this is the utmost, there is none beyond this. And whatever recluses and *brahmins* at present experience painful, racking, piercing feelings due to exertion, this is the utmost, there is none beyond this. But by this racking practice of austerities I have not attained any superhuman states, any distinction in knowledge and vision worthy of the noble ones. Could there be another path to enlightenment?”

In Search of the Bliss of Dhamma Through the Middle Path - *The Right Decision*

Let us now learn how the Buddha himself revealed how he entered the Middle Path after futile practices of different kinds of austerities. The Buddha said to *Sangârava*, “*Bhâradvâja*, I recall that when my father the *Sâkyan* was occupied, while I was sitting in the cool shade of a rose-apple tree, quite secluded from sensual pleasures, secluded from unwholesome states, I entered upon and abided in the first *jhâna*, which is accompanied by applied and sustained thought, with rapture and pleasure born of seclusion. Could that be the path to enlightenment?’ Then, following on that memory a realization arose in me, ‘That is indeed the path to enlightenment.’

“I thought 'Why am I afraid of that pleasure that has nothing to do with sensual pleasures and unwholesome states?' I thought 'I am not afraid of that pleasure since it has nothing to do with sensual pleasures and unwholesome states.’

“I considered 'It is not easy to attain that pleasure with a body so excessively emaciated. Suppose, I eat some solid food some boiled rice and porridge.' And I ate some solid food some boiled rice and porridge. Now, at that time five *bhikkhus* were waiting upon me, thinking: 'If our recluse *Gotama* achieves some higher state, he will inform us.' But, when I ate the boiled rice and porridge, the five *bhikkhus* were disgusted and left me, thinking: 'The recluse *Gotama* now lives luxuriously; he has given up his striving and reverted to luxury.' (These were the first five disciples to whom the Buddha delivered his first sermon after his enlightenment.)

Thus, our *Bodhisatta*, having taken enough food and drink for survival, having gained bodily strength, practiced and developed concentration. Then, quite secluded from sensual pleasures, secluded from unwholesome states, he entered upon and abided in the first *jhâna*, which is accompanied by applied thought and sustained thought, with rapture and pleasure born of seclusion. Then, he entered upon the second *jhâna*, the third *jhâna* and the fourth *jhâna* respectively and developed and cultivated more and more concentration. When his concentrated mind was thus purified, bright, unblemished, rid of imperfection, malleable, wieldy, steady, and attained to imperturbability, he directed it to the knowledge of the recollection of his past lives. As such, he recollected his manifold past lives that is hundreds, thousands, millions, eons of lives, how he was in the past and what he did in those past lives.

After that, the same purified mind was directed to understand how beings are born to this world and how beings pass and are born in other worlds. That too was very clear to him. Then, he directed his purified mind to understand the complete destruction of defilements, and taints. Then, he comprehended what is *unsatisfactoriness*, the cause of

“I thought 'Why am I afraid of that pleasure that has nothing to do with sensual pleasures and unwholesome states?' I thought 'I am not afraid of that pleasure since it has nothing to do with sensual pleasures and unwholesome states.’

“I considered 'It is not easy to attain that pleasure with a body so excessively emaciated. Suppose, I eat some solid food some boiled rice and porridge.' And I ate some solid food some boiled rice and porridge. Now, at that time five *bhikkhus* were waiting upon me, thinking: 'If our recluse *Gotama* achieves some higher state, he will inform us.' But, when I ate the boiled rice and porridge, the five *bhikkhus* were disgusted and left me, thinking: 'The recluse *Gotama* now lives luxuriously; he has given up his striving and reverted to luxury.' (These were the first five disciples to whom the Buddha delivered his first sermon after his enlightenment.)

Thus, our *Bodhisatta*, having taken enough food and drink for survival, having gained bodily strength, practiced and developed concentration. Then, quite secluded from sensual pleasures, secluded from unwholesome states, he entered upon and abided in the first *jhâna*, which is accompanied by applied thought and sustained thought, with rapture and pleasure born of seclusion. Then, he entered upon the second *jhâna*, the third *jhâna* and the fourth *jhâna* respectively and developed and cultivated more and more concentration. When his concentrated mind was thus purified, bright, unblemished, rid of imperfection, malleable, wieldy, steady, and attained to imperturbability, he directed it to the knowledge of the recollection of his past lives. As such, he recollected his manifold past lives that is hundreds, thousands, millions, eons of lives, how he was in the past and what he did in those past lives.

After that, the same purified mind was directed to understand how beings are born to this world and how beings pass and are born in other worlds. That too was very clear to him. Then, he directed his purified mind to understand the complete destruction of defilements, and taints. Then, he comprehended what is *unsatisfactoriness*, the cause of

unsatisfactoriness, the cessation of *unsatisfactoriness*, and the path leading to the cessation of *unsatisfactoriness*, and thus realized the Four Noble Truths. Finally, he realized the taints, the cause of taints, the cessation of taints and the path leading to the cessation of taints. As the result, he became the fully enlightened one in the world. That is how he followed the Middle Path. This Middle Path follows the sublime Dhamma, avoiding both the extreme of sensual indulgence and the extreme of self-mortification.

In the first discourse itself, Our Buddha described this Middle Path. The first discourse is The Setting of the Motion of the Wheel of the Dhamma. (Every Buddhist should read this discourse such an important one.)¹⁷

According to the facts presented above, we can understand how the Buddha, as a seeker of skillfulness(*kusala*), practiced severe austerities and without the aid of any other, he himself attained full enlightenment by realizing the Four Noble Truths together with their three phases and twelve aspects. Thus, he became *Sammâ Sambuddha*, the “Perfectly Self-Awakened One.” He was the first human ever who attained full enlightenment in this era without the assistance of any other super human or super natural force. If you would like to understand more about how he faced such a vast amount of *dukkha* during the six years of rigorous austerities, please read at least one of the following discourses from *The Middle Length Sayings of the Buddha: The Great Discourse on the Lion's Roar: Mahâ Sihanâda Sutta* (No. 12); *The Greater Discourse to Saccaka: Mahâ Saccaka Sutta* (No. 36); *To Prince Bodhi: Bodhirâja kumâra Sutta* (No.85); or *To Sangârava: Sangârava Sutta* (No. 100).

As recorded in the fifth chapter of *The Numerical Discourses of the Buddha*, before his attainment of enlightenment, the Buddha had five dreams. After his enlightenment, the Buddha explained these five dreams as follows.

“Monks, before his enlightenment, while he was just a *bodhisatta*, not fully enlightened, the *Tathâgata*, the *Arahant*,

unsatisfactoriness, the cessation of *unsatisfactoriness*, and the path leading to the cessation of *unsatisfactoriness*, and thus realized the Four Noble Truths. Finally, he realized the taints, the cause of taints, the cessation of taints and the path leading to the cessation of taints. As the result, he became the fully enlightened one in the world. That is how he followed the Middle Path. This Middle Path follows the sublime Dhamma, avoiding both the extreme of sensual indulgence and the extreme of self-mortification.

In the first discourse itself, Our Buddha described this Middle Path. The first discourse is The Setting of the Motion of the Wheel of the Dhamma. (Every Buddhist should read this discourse such an important one.)¹⁷

According to the facts presented above, we can understand how the Buddha, as a seeker of skillfulness(*kusala*), practiced severe austerities and without the aid of any other, he himself attained full enlightenment by realizing the Four Noble Truths together with their three phases and twelve aspects. Thus, he became *Sammâ Sambuddha*, the “Perfectly Self-Awakened One.” He was the first human ever who attained full enlightenment in this era without the assistance of any other super human or super natural force. If you would like to understand more about how he faced such a vast amount of *dukkha* during the six years of rigorous austerities, please read at least one of the following discourses from *The Middle Length Sayings of the Buddha: The Great Discourse on the Lion's Roar: Mahâ Sihanâda Sutta* (No. 12); *The Greater Discourse to Saccaka: Mahâ Saccaka Sutta* (No. 36); *To Prince Bodhi: Bodhirâja kumâra Sutta* (No.85); or *To Sangârava: Sangârava Sutta* (No. 100).

As recorded in the fifth chapter of *The Numerical Discourses of the Buddha*, before his attainment of enlightenment, the Buddha had five dreams. After his enlightenment, the Buddha explained these five dreams as follows.

“Monks, before his enlightenment, while he was just a *bodhisatta*, not fully enlightened, the *Tathâgata*, the *Arahant*,

the Perfectly Enlightened One [dreamt] that this mighty earth was his bedstead; the *Himâlaya*, king of mountains, was his pillow; his left hand rested on the eastern sea, his right hand on the western sea, and his two feet on the southern sea. This was the first great dream that appeared to the *Tathâgata*.

“Again, before his enlightenment . . . the *Tathâgata*, the *Arahant*, the Perfectly Enlightened One [dreamt] that a kind of grass called *tiriyâ* rose up from his navel and stood touching the sky. This was the second great dream that appeared to the *Tathâgata* . . . While he was just a *bodhisatta*, not fully enlightened.

“Again, before his enlightenment . . . the *Tathâgata*, the *Arahant*, the Perfectly Enlightened One [dreamt] that white worms with black heads crawled from his feet up to his knees and covered them. This was the third great dream that appeared to the *Tathâgata* . . . while he was just a *bodhisatta*, not fully enlightened.

“Again, before his enlightenment . . . the *Tathâgata*, the *Arahant*, the Perfectly Enlightened One [dreamt] that four birds of different colors came from the four quarters, fell at his feet, and turned all white. This was the fourth great dream that appeared to the *Tathâgata* . . . while he was just a *bodhisatta*, not fully enlightened.

“Again, before his enlightenment . . . the *Tathâgata*, the *Arahant*, the Perfectly Enlightened One [dreamt] that he climbed up a huge mountain of dung without being soiled by it. This was the fifth great dream that appeared to the *Tathâgata* . . . while he was just a *bodhisatta*, not fully enlightened.

Subsequently, explaining the meaning of the dreams the Buddha said that the first dream meant that he would awaken to the unsurpassed, perfect enlightenment.

The second dream meant that he would awaken to the Noble Eightfold Path and would proclaim it well among *devâs* and humans.

the Perfectly Enlightened One [dreamt] that this mighty earth was his bedstead; the *Himâlaya*, king of mountains, was his pillow; his left hand rested on the eastern sea, his right hand on the western sea, and his two feet on the southern sea. This was the first great dream that appeared to the *Tathâgata*.

“Again, before his enlightenment . . . the *Tathâgata*, the *Arahant*, the Perfectly Enlightened One [dreamt] that a kind of grass called *tiriyâ* rose up from his navel and stood touching the sky. This was the second great dream that appeared to the *Tathâgata* . . . While he was just a *bodhisatta*, not fully enlightened.

“Again, before his enlightenment . . . the *Tathâgata*, the *Arahant*, the Perfectly Enlightened One [dreamt] that white worms with black heads crawled from his feet up to his knees and covered them. This was the third great dream that appeared to the *Tathâgata* . . . while he was just a *bodhisatta*, not fully enlightened.

“Again, before his enlightenment . . . the *Tathâgata*, the *Arahant*, the Perfectly Enlightened One [dreamt] that four birds of different colors came from the four quarters, fell at his feet, and turned all white. This was the fourth great dream that appeared to the *Tathâgata* . . . while he was just a *bodhisatta*, not fully enlightened.

“Again, before his enlightenment . . . the *Tathâgata*, the *Arahant*, the Perfectly Enlightened One [dreamt] that he climbed up a huge mountain of dung without being soiled by it. This was the fifth great dream that appeared to the *Tathâgata* . . . while he was just a *bodhisatta*, not fully enlightened.

Subsequently, explaining the meaning of the dreams the Buddha said that the first dream meant that he would awaken to the unsurpassed, perfect enlightenment.

The second dream meant that he would awaken to the Noble Eightfold Path and would proclaim it well among *devâs* and humans.

The third dream meant that there would be many white clad householders who would go for lifelong refuge to the Buddha.

The forth dream meant that the members of the four classes - *brahmins, khattiya, vessas, and suddas* - would go forth from the household life into homelessness in the *Dhamma* and Discipline proclaimed by the Buddha and realize unsurpassed liberation.

The fifth dream meant that he would receive robes, alms food, dwellings, and medicines and provisions for the sick, but he would use them without being tied them up, infatuated with them, and blindly absorbed in them, seeing the danger and knowing the escape.¹⁸

Perfectly Self-Awakened -

Attainment of the Most Excellent Position in the World

Attainment of enlightenment is the most excellent position in the world. All other positions are capricious, but this position is certainly irreversible and incontrovertible by any others because it is a self-victory. Once the Buddha himself said, “There is neither a god, nor an angel, nor a *Mâra* or a *Brahma* to turn into defeat the victory of such a person who is self-subdued and ever restrained in conduct.”

Neva devo na gandabbo- na mâro saha brahmunâ

*Jitam apajitam kairâ tathârupassa jantuno.*¹⁹

Buddha-hood is the accomplishment of wholesomeness that was acquired through time immemorial with great exertion, dedication, renunciation, and firm determination. That can be achieved only through dedication and clear comprehension, establishing and developing the *Dhamma* and following the Middle Path. It is impossible by mere prayers or simply trying to attain the fulfillment of perfections. It is the unparalleled state of mind and the supreme bliss that one can gain by realizing the Four Noble Truths.

The third dream meant that there would be many white clad householders who would go for lifelong refuge to the Buddha.

The forth dream meant that the members of the four classes - *brahmins, khattiya, vessas, and suddas* - would go forth from the household life into homelessness in the *Dhamma* and Discipline proclaimed by the Buddha and realize unsurpassed liberation.

The fifth dream meant that he would receive robes, alms food, dwellings, and medicines and provisions for the sick, but he would use them without being tied them up, infatuated with them, and blindly absorbed in them, seeing the danger and knowing the escape.¹⁸

Perfectly Self-Awakened -

Attainment of the Most Excellent Position in the World

Attainment of enlightenment is the most excellent position in the world. All other positions are capricious, but this position is certainly irreversible and incontrovertible by any others because it is a self-victory. Once the Buddha himself said, “There is neither a god, nor an angel, nor a *Mâra* or a *Brahma* to turn into defeat the victory of such a person who is self-subdued and ever restrained in conduct.”

Neva devo na gandabbo- na mâro saha brahmunâ

*Jitam apajitam kairâ tathârupassa jantuno.*¹⁹

Buddha-hood is the accomplishment of wholesomeness that was acquired through time immemorial with great exertion, dedication, renunciation, and firm determination. That can be achieved only through dedication and clear comprehension, establishing and developing the *Dhamma* and following the Middle Path. It is impossible by mere prayers or simply trying to attain the fulfillment of perfections. It is the unparalleled state of mind and the supreme bliss that one can gain by realizing the Four Noble Truths.

Now, let us understand how Our Buddha attained that supreme bliss as the Buddha himself taught us. That is the state of perfect self-awakening.

As long as he had not yet attained full enlightenment, Our Buddha never declared that he had attained such a state. It was only after his attainment of enlightenment he declared that he attained full enlightenment. The Buddha himself said this in the Discourse on Gratification of *The Connected Discourses of the Buddha* as follows.

“So long, *bhikkhus*, as I did not directly know as they really are the gratification, the danger, and the escape in the case of these five aggregates subject to clinging, I did not claim to have awakened to the unsurpassed perfect enlightenment in this world with its *devâs*, *mâras*, and *brahmâs*, in this generation with its ascetics and *brahmins*, its *devâs* and humans. But when I directly knew all this as it really is, then I claimed to have awakened to the unsurpassed perfect enlightenment in this world with *devâs*, *mâras*, and *brahmâs*, in this generation with its ascetics and *brahmins*, its *devâs* and humans. The knowledge and vision arose in me: 'Unshakable is my liberation of mind; this is my last birth; now there is no more renewed existence.’”²⁰

In the *Mahâ Padhâna Sutta* of *The Sutta Nipâta* and *Ariyapariyesana*, *Bhaya Bherava*, *Mahâ Saccaka*, and *Sangârava Sutta* of the *Majjhima Nikâya* and *Mahâ Vagga* of the Book of Discipline as well as in the *Udâna* (The Exclamations), Our Buddha has clearly described how he attained enlightenment.

As we see it, according to the scriptures, the worst impediment that he had for the attainment of enlightenment was the impediment of *Mâra*.

According to some people, *Mâra* is a mere concept. What is more significant is to understand things as they are through facts rather than concepts or beliefs. As mentioned in some discourses, there was a personification of *Mâra* named *Vasavatti Mâra*. In accordance with some discourses of the

Now, let us understand how Our Buddha attained that supreme bliss as the Buddha himself taught us. That is the state of perfect self-awakening.

As long as he had not yet attained full enlightenment, Our Buddha never declared that he had attained such a state. It was only after his attainment of enlightenment he declared that he attained full enlightenment. The Buddha himself said this in the Discourse on Gratification of *The Connected Discourses of the Buddha* as follows.

“So long, *bhikkhus*, as I did not directly know as they really are the gratification, the danger, and the escape in the case of these five aggregates subject to clinging, I did not claim to have awakened to the unsurpassed perfect enlightenment in this world with its *devâs*, *mâras*, and *brahmâs*, in this generation with its ascetics and *brahmins*, its *devâs* and humans. But when I directly knew all this as it really is, then I claimed to have awakened to the unsurpassed perfect enlightenment in this world with *devâs*, *mâras*, and *brahmâs*, in this generation with its ascetics and *brahmins*, its *devâs* and humans. The knowledge and vision arose in me: 'Unshakable is my liberation of mind; this is my last birth; now there is no more renewed existence.’”²⁰

In the *Mahâ Padhâna Sutta* of *The Sutta Nipâta* and *Ariyapariyesana*, *Bhaya Bherava*, *Mahâ Saccaka*, and *Sangârava Sutta* of the *Majjhima Nikâya* and *Mahâ Vagga* of the Book of Discipline as well as in the *Udâna* (The Exclamations), Our Buddha has clearly described how he attained enlightenment.

As we see it, according to the scriptures, the worst impediment that he had for the attainment of enlightenment was the impediment of *Mâra*.

According to some people, *Mâra* is a mere concept. What is more significant is to understand things as they are through facts rather than concepts or beliefs. As mentioned in some discourses, there was a personification of *Mâra* named *Vasavatti Mâra*. In accordance with some discourses of the

Mâra Samyutta, Bhikkhu Samyutta and Bhikkhuni Samyutta of The Samyutta Nikâya as well as the Mâratajjaniya Sutta and brahmanimantana Sutta of The Majjhima Nikâya, this particular Vasavatti Mâra disturbed the Buddha, Venerable Mahâ Moggallana, and other monks and nuns on many different occasions.

Let us now investigate the *Padhâna Sutta* of *The Sutta Nipâta* where the Buddha explained how *Mâra*, the evil one, came to him after completion of six futile years of rigorous austerities. Just before his enlightenment, *Mâra* disturbed the Buddha while he was practicing with much exertion and much dedication with a clear understanding of the path to liberation.

The Buddha says, “I was living on the bank of the *Neranjara* River, engaged in deep struggle, practicing meditation with all my strength in the effort to find freedom from bondage. *Mâra*, the evil one, came up to me and started talking to me in words appearing to be full of sympathy: 'You're so thin and pale', he said. 'Why you're near to death!' I'll bet a thousand to one you're going to die-there's only the slightest chance that you'll survive! My dear sir, do live! It's far better to live you could accumulate merit if you stayed alive. You could lead the religious life, perform the offerings to the fire god it's a sure way to get lots of merit. What's the point of all this exertion? The path of exertion and struggle is difficult, hard and strenuous, and full of troubles.”

Uttering these words, *Mâra* stood next to the Buddha. Then, the Buddha told *Mâra*, “Why have you come here, Evil One, you friend of negligence? I do not need the least merit you speak of. O *Mâra*, you should preach about merits to those who need them. I have confidence and energy and knowledge as well. Therefore, have I engaged myself in effort? Why do you inquire about my life? When the wind blows, even rivers and streams are dried up, so why shouldn't it dry up my blood while I am deep in struggle? As the blood dries up, so too will bile and phlegm. The body may be wasting away, but the mind gets more and more settled, more and more do mindfulness, wisdom, and concentration get established in

Mâra Samyutta, Bhikkhu Samyutta and Bhikkhuni Samyutta of The Samyutta Nikâya as well as the Mâratajjaniya Sutta and brahmanimantana Sutta of The Majjhima Nikâya, this particular Vasavatti Mâra disturbed the Buddha, Venerable Mahâ Moggallana, and other monks and nuns on many different occasions.

Let us now investigate the *Padhâna Sutta* of *The Sutta Nipâta* where the Buddha explained how *Mâra*, the evil one, came to him after completion of six futile years of rigorous austerities. Just before his enlightenment, *Mâra* disturbed the Buddha while he was practicing with much exertion and much dedication with a clear understanding of the path to liberation.

The Buddha says, “I was living on the bank of the *Neranjara* River, engaged in deep struggle, practicing meditation with all my strength in the effort to find freedom from bondage. *Mâra*, the evil one, came up to me and started talking to me in words appearing to be full of sympathy: 'You're so thin and pale', he said. 'Why you're near to death!' I'll bet a thousand to one you're going to die-there's only the slightest chance that you'll survive! My dear sir, do live! It's far better to live you could accumulate merit if you stayed alive. You could lead the religious life, perform the offerings to the fire god it's a sure way to get lots of merit. What's the point of all this exertion? The path of exertion and struggle is difficult, hard and strenuous, and full of troubles.”

Uttering these words, *Mâra* stood next to the Buddha. Then, the Buddha told *Mâra*, “Why have you come here, Evil One, you friend of negligence? I do not need the least merit you speak of. O *Mâra*, you should preach about merits to those who need them. I have confidence and energy and knowledge as well. Therefore, have I engaged myself in effort? Why do you inquire about my life? When the wind blows, even rivers and streams are dried up, so why shouldn't it dry up my blood while I am deep in struggle? As the blood dries up, so too will bile and phlegm. The body may be wasting away, but the mind gets more and more settled, more and more do mindfulness, wisdom, and concentration get established in

me. While living in this manner, experiencing the extremes of sensation, my mind no longer aspires for sensuous pleasures. The foremost of your armies is that of Desire, the second is called Dislike, the third is Hunger-Thirst, the fourth is Craving, the fifth is the army of Lethargy-Laziness, the sixth is Fear, the seventh is Doubt, and the eighth is Obstinacy-Restlessness. Then, there are also material gain, praise, honor and fame obtained by wrongful means. One may also think highly of oneself and disparage others. These, O *Mâra*, are your forces, the attackers of the Evil One. One less than a hero will not be victorious over them and attain happiness. Look: do you see this strand of *munja* grass I am wearing? I do not care for life. I would rather die in this conflict than be alive but defeated. There are monks and hermits who have drowned [in defilements] and never see that path which the well-conducted ones tread. I can see the troops all around me, with *Mâra* mounted on an elephant, and I go forward into the struggle. Even though the whole world, inclusive of its gods, cannot beat that army of yours, I am going to destroy it with the power of wisdom like an unfired clay pot with a stone. With disciplined thought and firmly grounded mindfulness. I shall travel from country to country training numerous disciples. Alert and energetic in the practice of my teaching, contrary to your wish, they will attain that which having attained they will not come to grief.”

Then, the *Mâra* said, “I’ve followed the Blessed One for seven years and I’ve watched every step he’s made. And not once have I had access to him, who’s completely enlightened and mindful. I remember once seeing a crow hovering above a lump of fat on the ground below. “Ah, food!” it thought. But the lump turned out to be a rock, hard and inedible, and the crow flew away disgusted. We’ve had enough; it’s like that crow eating rock for us; we’re going away, we’re finished with *Gotama!*” At the end of this discourse it is mentioned here *Mâra* was so upset by his failure that he dropped the lute he was carrying, and at the moment it fell to the ground, the evil minded, *yakkha*, disappeared.²¹

me. While living in this manner, experiencing the extremes of sensation, my mind no longer aspires for sensuous pleasures. The foremost of your armies is that of Desire, the second is called Dislike, the third is Hunger-Thirst, the fourth is Craving, the fifth is the army of Lethargy-Laziness, the sixth is Fear, the seventh is Doubt, and the eighth is Obstinacy-Restlessness. Then, there are also material gain, praise, honor and fame obtained by wrongful means. One may also think highly of oneself and disparage others. These, O *Mâra*, are your forces, the attackers of the Evil One. One less than a hero will not be victorious over them and attain happiness. Look: do you see this strand of *munja* grass I am wearing? I do not care for life. I would rather die in this conflict than be alive but defeated. There are monks and hermits who have drowned [in defilements] and never see that path which the well-conducted ones tread. I can see the troops all around me, with *Mâra* mounted on an elephant, and I go forward into the struggle. Even though the whole world, inclusive of its gods, cannot beat that army of yours, I am going to destroy it with the power of wisdom like an unfired clay pot with a stone. With disciplined thought and firmly grounded mindfulness. I shall travel from country to country training numerous disciples. Alert and energetic in the practice of my teaching, contrary to your wish, they will attain that which having attained they will not come to grief.”

Then, the *Mâra* said, “I’ve followed the Blessed One for seven years and I’ve watched every step he’s made. And not once have I had access to him, who’s completely enlightened and mindful. I remember once seeing a crow hovering above a lump of fat on the ground below. “Ah, food!” it thought. But the lump turned out to be a rock, hard and inedible, and the crow flew away disgusted. We’ve had enough; it’s like that crow eating rock for us; we’re going away, we’re finished with *Gotama!*” At the end of this discourse it is mentioned here *Mâra* was so upset by his failure that he dropped the lute he was carrying, and at the moment it fell to the ground, the evil minded, *yakkha*, disappeared.²¹

This is how the Buddha explained the way that he attained enlightenment in the *The Noble Search Sutta* of the *Majjhima Nikāya*. The Buddha says, “Still in search, *bhikkhus*, of what is wholesome, seeking the supreme state of sublime peace, I wandered by stages through the Magadhan country until eventually I arrived at *Uruvela*, at *Senanigama*. There I saw an agreeable piece of ground, a delightful grove with a clear-flowing river with pleasant, smooth banks and nearby a village for alms resort. I considered: 'This is an agreeable piece of ground; this is a delightful grove with a clear-flowing river with pleasant, smooth banks and nearby a village for alms resort. This will serve for the striving of a clansman intent on striving.' And I sat down there thinking: 'this will serve for striving.’”

That was how our *Bodhisatta* on the *pre-Vesak* day after having milk-rice offered by *Sujāta* at the village of *Senāni* approached the Bodhi tree. After reaching the Bodhi tree, throughout the night he practiced meditation and eventually during the three watches of the night, he gained three kinds of knowledge and attained full enlightenment.

The Buddha declared the right knowledge that he gained in this manner. “*Bhikkhus*, being myself subject to birth, having understood the danger in what is subject to birth, seeking the unborn supreme security from bondage, *Nibbāna*, I attained the unborn supreme security from bondage, *Nibbāna*; being myself subject to aging, having understood the danger in what is subject to aging, seeking the unaging supreme security from bondage, *Nibbāna*, I attained the unaging supreme security from bondage, *Nibbāna*; being myself subject to sickness, having understood the danger in what is subject to sickness, seeking the unailing supreme security from bondage, *Nibbāna*, I attained the unailing supreme security from bondage, *Nibbāna*; being myself subject to death, having understood the danger in what is subject to death, seeking the deathless supreme security from bondage, *Nibbāna*, I attained the deathless supreme security from bondage, *Nibbāna*; being myself subject to sorrow, having understood the danger in what is subject to sorrow, seeking

This is how the Buddha explained the way that he attained enlightenment in the *The Noble Search Sutta* of the *Majjhima Nikāya*. The Buddha says, “Still in search, *bhikkhus*, of what is wholesome, seeking the supreme state of sublime peace, I wandered by stages through the Magadhan country until eventually I arrived at *Uruvela*, at *Senanigama*. There I saw an agreeable piece of ground, a delightful grove with a clear-flowing river with pleasant, smooth banks and nearby a village for alms resort. I considered: 'This is an agreeable piece of ground; this is a delightful grove with a clear-flowing river with pleasant, smooth banks and nearby a village for alms resort. This will serve for the striving of a clansman intent on striving.' And I sat down there thinking: 'this will serve for striving.’”

That was how our *Bodhisatta* on the *pre-Vesak* day after having milk-rice offered by *Sujāta* at the village of *Senāni* approached the Bodhi tree. After reaching the Bodhi tree, throughout the night he practiced meditation and eventually during the three watches of the night, he gained three kinds of knowledge and attained full enlightenment.

The Buddha declared the right knowledge that he gained in this manner. “*Bhikkhus*, being myself subject to birth, having understood the danger in what is subject to birth, seeking the unborn supreme security from bondage, *Nibbāna*, I attained the unborn supreme security from bondage, *Nibbāna*; being myself subject to aging, having understood the danger in what is subject to aging, seeking the unaging supreme security from bondage, *Nibbāna*, I attained the unaging supreme security from bondage, *Nibbāna*; being myself subject to sickness, having understood the danger in what is subject to sickness, seeking the unailing supreme security from bondage, *Nibbāna*, I attained the unailing supreme security from bondage, *Nibbāna*; being myself subject to death, having understood the danger in what is subject to death, seeking the deathless supreme security from bondage, *Nibbāna*, I attained the deathless supreme security from bondage, *Nibbāna*; being myself subject to sorrow, having understood the danger in what is subject to sorrow, seeking

the sorrowless supreme security from bondage, *Nibbâna*, I attained the sorrowless supreme security from bondage, *Nibbâna*; being myself subject to defilement, having understood the danger in what is subject to defilement, seeking the undefiled supreme security from bondage, *Nibbâna*, I attained the undefiled supreme security from bondage, *Nibbâna*. The knowledge and vision arose in me: 'My deliverance is unshakable; this is my last birth; now there is no renewal of being.'²²

In the *Fear and Dread Sutta* of the *Majjhima Nikâya*, the Buddha clearly mentions that what he gained during the first watch of night was the knowledge of recollection of the previous lives, during the second watch of night, the knowledge of seeing how beings are born here and how they depart here and are born somewhere else, and during the last watch of night, the knowledge of the complete destruction of taints.²³

The perfectly self-awakened One realized the true nature of all animate and inanimate things as they really are. This realization is the realization of the three characteristics of existence. Together with this, he gained the immaculate realization of the entire knowledge of the Four Noble Truths, and the Dependent Origination as well.

In this manner, Our Buddha, as the Peerless One, by realizing all kinds of knowledge and having obtained ten kinds of supreme powers, four kinds of intrepidities, six kinds of unparalleled knowledge, and realizing things as they really are, became the Supreme Buddha of our era, "Our Buddha."

With the dawn of this light of wisdom, the enlightenment, Our Buddha uttered the following triumphant statement.

"Though many a birth I wandered in *Samsâra*,
Seeking but not finding
The builder of this house.
Sorrowful it is to be born again and again.
House-builder! Thou art seen.
Thou shalt build no house again.

the sorrowless supreme security from bondage, *Nibbâna*, I attained the sorrowless supreme security from bondage, *Nibbâna*; being myself subject to defilement, having understood the danger in what is subject to defilement, seeking the undefiled supreme security from bondage, *Nibbâna*, I attained the undefiled supreme security from bondage, *Nibbâna*. The knowledge and vision arose in me: 'My deliverance is unshakable; this is my last birth; now there is no renewal of being.'²²

In the *Fear and Dread Sutta* of the *Majjhima Nikâya*, the Buddha clearly mentions that what he gained during the first watch of night was the knowledge of recollection of the previous lives, during the second watch of night, the knowledge of seeing how beings are born here and how they depart here and are born somewhere else, and during the last watch of night, the knowledge of the complete destruction of taints.²³

The perfectly self-awakened One realized the true nature of all animate and inanimate things as they really are. This realization is the realization of the three characteristics of existence. Together with this, he gained the immaculate realization of the entire knowledge of the Four Noble Truths, and the Dependent Origination as well.

In this manner, Our Buddha, as the Peerless One, by realizing all kinds of knowledge and having obtained ten kinds of supreme powers, four kinds of intrepidities, six kinds of unparalleled knowledge, and realizing things as they really are, became the Supreme Buddha of our era, "Our Buddha."

With the dawn of this light of wisdom, the enlightenment, Our Buddha uttered the following triumphant statement.

"Though many a birth I wandered in *Samsâra*,
Seeking but not finding
The builder of this house.
Sorrowful it is to be born again and again.
House-builder! Thou art seen.
Thou shalt build no house again.

All thy rafters are broken.
Thy ridgepole is shattered.
My mind has attained the unconditioned.
Achieved is the end of craving."
(*Anekajâti samsâram -Sandhâvissam -anibbisam*
Gahakârakam gavesanto-Dukkhâjâti-
punappunam
Gahakâraka ditthosi -puna geham nakâhasi
Sabbâte phâsukâbhaggâ -gahakutam visamkhitam
Visamkhâragatam cittam -tanhânam
Khayamajjhagâ.)²⁴

All thy rafters are broken.
Thy ridgepole is shattered.
My mind has attained the unconditioned.
Achieved is the end of craving."
(*Anekajâti samsâram -Sandhâvissam -anibbisam*
Gahakârakam gavesanto-Dukkhâjâti-
punappunam
Gahakâraka ditthosi -puna geham nakâhasi
Sabbâte phâsukâbhaggâ -gahakutam visamkhitam
Visamkhâragatam cittam -tanhânam
Khayamajjhagâ.)²⁴

Chapter 2

The Buddha was Born

Have you ever heard that two fully enlightened ones cannot be born in the world simultaneously? Only Our Buddha teaches us such things. In accordance with the nature of the world, only one Buddha was born during this era, our era. That was Our Buddha, *Gotama*, the Supremely Self-Awakened One, the Perfectly Enlightened One.

Oh! Lord, Venerable sir, Bhante, the only Buddha in whom we put confidence, conviction, and went for refuge with wisdom. You are, sir, the most excellent unparalleled person who developed wisdom to perfection. You are the greatest teacher full of loving friendliness, compassion, and appreciative joy who consoled the minds of innumerable beings and taught us the essence of freedom of thought. The Venerable One is the peerless and marvelous guide, the declarer of the path (*maggakkhâi*), skilled in the path (*magga kovido*), knower of the path (*maggaññu*) who guides numerous beings wandering in *samsâra* hindered by ignorance and fettered by craving from the wrong path to the Dhamma path. You are the embodiment of great compassion, great wisdom, and the infinite ocean of loving friendliness. The greatest vanquisher who taught us what real non-violence is, and the greatest teacher who paved the way for the revolution of freedom of thought for those who were imprisoned in outdated tangles of views. The Supreme Being always promoting the Dhamma; you are the greatest man and the greatest historical religious master ever born among men. The greatest Compassionate One, Self-Awakened One, Buddha the mother, Buddha the father, let me pay homage in front of your pure lotus-like feet with utmost confidence, the second time, and the third time as well!

According to the great chapter of the Code of Discipline (*Mahâ Vagga*), the discourse of the Noble *Quest* in The

Chapter 2

The Buddha was Born

Have you ever heard that two fully enlightened ones cannot be born in the world simultaneously? Only Our Buddha teaches us such things. In accordance with the nature of the world, only one Buddha was born during this era, our era. That was Our Buddha, *Gotama*, the Supremely Self-Awakened One, the Perfectly Enlightened One.

Oh! Lord, Venerable sir, Bhante, the only Buddha in whom we put confidence, conviction, and went for refuge with wisdom. You are, sir, the most excellent unparalleled person who developed wisdom to perfection. You are the greatest teacher full of loving friendliness, compassion, and appreciative joy who consoled the minds of innumerable beings and taught us the essence of freedom of thought. The Venerable One is the peerless and marvelous guide, the declarer of the path (*maggakkhâi*), skilled in the path (*magga kovido*), knower of the path (*maggaññu*) who guides numerous beings wandering in *samsâra* hindered by ignorance and fettered by craving from the wrong path to the Dhamma path. You are the embodiment of great compassion, great wisdom, and the infinite ocean of loving friendliness. The greatest vanquisher who taught us what real non-violence is, and the greatest teacher who paved the way for the revolution of freedom of thought for those who were imprisoned in outdated tangles of views. The Supreme Being always promoting the Dhamma; you are the greatest man and the greatest historical religious master ever born among men. The greatest Compassionate One, Self-Awakened One, Buddha the mother, Buddha the father, let me pay homage in front of your pure lotus-like feet with utmost confidence, the second time, and the third time as well!

According to the great chapter of the Code of Discipline (*Mahâ Vagga*), the discourse of the Noble *Quest* in The

Middle Length Sayings of the Buddha and the Udâna Pâli,²⁵ after the attainment of the peerless state of supreme enlightenment under the Bodhi tree at *Uruvela* on the bank of the river *Neranjara*, the Buddha spent a whole week being sensitive to the great bliss of enlightenment under the benign shade of that Bodhi tree. While he was enjoying the bliss of enlightenment under the Bodhi tree, he contemplated upon the Dependent Origination in “forward order,” and “reverse order,” and both in the “forward and reverse order” during the three watches of the night. It was after that, he declared,

As phenomena grow clear
To the *Brahmin* ardent, absorbed,
His doubts all vanish,
When he discerns what has a cause.

As phenomena grow clear
To the *Brahmin* ardent, absorbed,
His doubts all vanish,
When he penetrates the end of conditions.

As phenomena grow clear
To the *Brahmin* ardent, absorbed,
He stands, routing the troops of *Mâra*,
Like the sun that illumines the sky.

Once, Our Buddha, addressing his attendant Venerable *Ananda* said that the appearance of the Buddha in the world in this manner is a cause for the lack of worshiping, reverence, honor, veneration and the scarcity of the four requisites for contemplatives of other sects, debaters, and wrong-viewers as well. The Buddha said, “That’s how it is, *Ananda*. That’s how it is. As long as *Tathâgatas* worthy and rightly self-awakened do not appear in the world, that’s when the wanderers of other sects are worshiped, revered, honored, venerated, and given homage recipients of robes, alms food, lodgings, and medicinal requisites for the sick. But when *Tathâgatas* worthy and rightly self-awakened appear in the world, that’s when the wanderers of other sects are not worshiped, revered, honored, venerated, or given homage; nor are they recipients of robes, alms food, lodgings, and

Middle Length Sayings of the Buddha and the Udâna Pâli,²⁵ after the attainment of the peerless state of supreme enlightenment under the Bodhi tree at *Uruvela* on the bank of the river *Neranjara*, the Buddha spent a whole week being sensitive to the great bliss of enlightenment under the benign shade of that Bodhi tree. While he was enjoying the bliss of enlightenment under the Bodhi tree, he contemplated upon the Dependent Origination in “forward order,” and “reverse order,” and both in the “forward and reverse order” during the three watches of the night. It was after that, he declared,

As phenomena grow clear
To the *Brahmin* ardent, absorbed,
His doubts all vanish,
When he discerns what has a cause.

As phenomena grow clear
To the *Brahmin* ardent, absorbed,
His doubts all vanish,
When he penetrates the end of conditions.

As phenomena grow clear
To the *Brahmin* ardent, absorbed,
He stands, routing the troops of *Mâra*,
Like the sun that illumines the sky.

Once, Our Buddha, addressing his attendant Venerable *Ananda* said that the appearance of the Buddha in the world in this manner is a cause for the lack of worshiping, reverence, honor, veneration and the scarcity of the four requisites for contemplatives of other sects, debaters, and wrong-viewers as well. The Buddha said, “That’s how it is, *Ananda*. That’s how it is. As long as *Tathâgatas* worthy and rightly self-awakened do not appear in the world, that’s when the wanderers of other sects are worshiped, revered, honored, venerated, and given homage recipients of robes, alms food, lodgings, and medicinal requisites for the sick. But when *Tathâgatas* worthy and rightly self-awakened appear in the world, that’s when the wanderers of other sects are not worshiped, revered, honored, venerated, or given homage; nor are they recipients of robes, alms food, lodgings, and

medicinal requisites for the sick. Now only the *Tathâgata* is worshiped, revered, honored, venerated, and given homage—a recipient of robes, alms food, lodgings, and medicinal requisites for the sick along with the community of monks.”

The cause for this is the revelation of the fraud that they had been teaching to the world for so long . The Buddha further said, "When the *Tathâgata* is born, they all become miserable and never escape from suffering. They become like fireflies in the sun. Fireflies only glow when the sun is not shining, only in dark. Once the sun starts to shine they all become gloomy."²⁶

Being Sensitive with the Bliss of Release

According to the *Lokavolokana Sutta* of the *Udâna Pâli*, after the attainment of enlightenment, being sensitive with that bliss of release for seven days, the Blessed One, having emerged from that concentration, did a survey of the world with the eye of the Buddha. Then, he saw numerous beings burning with the fever of defilement and aflame led by greed, hatred, and delusion. Thereafter, the Blessed One said,

“This world [the fathom-length five aggregates together with perception and consciousness, i.e. a man or a woman] is born of burning. Afflicted by contact, It calls disease a 'self.'
By whatever means it construes [as I'm], it becomes otherwise than that.
Becoming otherwise, the world is attached to becoming afflicted by becoming, and yet delights in that very becoming.
Where there's delight, there is fear.
What one fears is discomfort.
This holy life is lived for the abandoning of becoming.”

There are recluses and *brahmins* who believe becoming itself is the way to release from becoming, but they are not released from becoming, I say. Those recluses and *brahmins* who proclaim the escape of becoming from non-becoming are also

medicinal requisites for the sick. Now only the *Tathâgata* is worshiped, revered, honored, venerated, and given homage—a recipient of robes, alms food, lodgings, and medicinal requisites for the sick along with the community of monks.”

The cause for this is the revelation of the fraud that they had been teaching to the world for so long . The Buddha further said, "When the *Tathâgata* is born, they all become miserable and never escape from suffering. They become like fireflies in the sun. Fireflies only glow when the sun is not shining, only in dark. Once the sun starts to shine they all become gloomy."²⁶

Being Sensitive with the Bliss of Release

According to the *Lokavolokana Sutta* of the *Udâna Pâli*, after the attainment of enlightenment, being sensitive with that bliss of release for seven days, the Blessed One, having emerged from that concentration, did a survey of the world with the eye of the Buddha. Then, he saw numerous beings burning with the fever of defilement and aflame led by greed, hatred, and delusion. Thereafter, the Blessed One said,

“This world [the fathom-length five aggregates together with perception and consciousness, i.e. a man or a woman] is born of burning. Afflicted by contact, It calls disease a 'self.'
By whatever means it construes [as I'm], it becomes otherwise than that.
Becoming otherwise, the world is attached to becoming afflicted by becoming, and yet delights in that very becoming.
Where there's delight, there is fear.
What one fears is discomfort.
This holy life is lived for the abandoning of becoming.”

There are recluses and *brahmins* who believe becoming itself is the way to release from becoming, but they are not released from becoming, I say. Those recluses and *brahmins* who proclaim the escape of becoming from non-becoming are also

not released from becoming, I say. This discomfort arises because of attachment; with the cessation of all attachments, there never arises discomfort. See this diversified world! Those beings, who are afflicted with ignorance, attached to becoming, do not escape from becoming. On all levels of becoming, there is nothing but impermanence, unsatisfactoriness and ever-changing nature. For the one who sees this with proper wisdom, craving for becoming ceases. He neither appreciates becoming nor non-becoming. Having completely cut off craving, without any residue, is the non-attachment, complete cessation, the bliss of *Nibbâna*. That practitioner who has come to the state of extinction has no more re-becoming. He has overcome *Mâra*. He is the conqueror of the battle and the one gone beyond all becoming.”²⁷

After seven days of concentration under the Bodhi Tree, the Buddha went to the *Ajapâla* banyan tree. There also he enjoyed the bliss of enlightenment and the bliss of release for seven days. While the Buddha was dwelling there, a certain overbearing *brahmin* came to the Buddha exchanged courteous greetings and asked; “Master *Gotama*, to what extent, is one a *brahmin*? And what are the qualities that make one a *brahmin*?” Then, the Blessed One said,

"Any *brahmin* who has banished evil things Not
overbearing, not stained,
his mind controlled -
gone to the end of wisdom,
the holy life completed

Rightly would that *brahmin*
speak the holy teaching.
He has no swelling of pride
any where in the world.”

Yo brâhmano bâhita pâpa dhammo
Nihuhumkako nikkasâvo yatatto
Vedantagu vusita brahmacariyo
Dhammena so brahmavâdam vadeyya
*Yassussadâ natthi kuhinci loke.*²⁸

not released from becoming, I say. This discomfort arises because of attachment; with the cessation of all attachments, there never arises discomfort. See this diversified world! Those beings, who are afflicted with ignorance, attached to becoming, do not escape from becoming. On all levels of becoming, there is nothing but impermanence, unsatisfactoriness and ever-changing nature. For the one who sees this with proper wisdom, craving for becoming ceases. He neither appreciates becoming nor non-becoming. Having completely cut off craving, without any residue, is the non-attachment, complete cessation, the bliss of *Nibbâna*. That practitioner who has come to the state of extinction has no more re-becoming. He has overcome *Mâra*. He is the conqueror of the battle and the one gone beyond all becoming.”²⁷

After seven days of concentration under the Bodhi Tree, the Buddha went to the *Ajapâla* banyan tree. There also he enjoyed the bliss of enlightenment and the bliss of release for seven days. While the Buddha was dwelling there, a certain overbearing *brahmin* came to the Buddha exchanged courteous greetings and asked; “Master *Gotama*, to what extent, is one a *brahmin*? And what are the qualities that make one a *brahmin*?” Then, the Blessed One said,

"Any *brahmin* who has banished evil things Not
overbearing, not stained,
his mind controlled -
gone to the end of wisdom,
the holy life completed

Rightly would that *brahmin*
speak the holy teaching.
He has no swelling of pride
any where in the world.”

Yo brâhmano bâhita pâpa dhammo
Nihuhumkako nikkasâvo yatatto
Vedantagu vusita brahmacariyo
Dhammena so brahmavâdam vadeyya
*Yassussadâ natthi kuhinci loke.*²⁸

Then, Our Buddha, the giver of peace and the bringer of the best went from the *Ajapâla* banyan tree to the foot of the *Mucalinda* tree after seven days. At the foot of that tree, again being sensitive to the bliss of release, the Buddha dwelt for seven days. While he was dwelling there, an untimely torrential rain fell together with gusts of cold wind. Then, the Serpent King (a *Nâga*) named *Mucalinda* appeared and made a coil around the Buddha's body seven times and kept its hood over the head of the Buddha as to protect the Buddha from cold wind, rain, mosquitoes or gadflies, etc. The rain itself remained for seven days and the King of *Nâga* protected the Buddha continuously for seven days. When the clouds faded away and the sky was clear, the king of *Nâga* unraveled his coils from the body of the Buddha and dropped his own appearance and appeared before the Buddha as a young man with hands joined before his heart, paying homage to the Buddha. Thereupon, the Buddha exclaimed as follows:

"Blissful is solitude
for one who's content,
who has heard the Dhamma,
who sees.
Blissful is non-affliction
with regard for the world,
restraint for living beings.
Blissful is dispassion
with regard for the world,
the overcoming of sensuality.
But the subduing of the conceit "I am"
That is truly the ultimate bliss."

Sukho viveko tutthassa - sutadhammassa passato
Abyâpajjam sukham loke -pânabhutesu samyamo
Sukhâ virâgatâ loke - kâ mânâ nam samatikkamo
*Asmimânassa yo vinayo -etam ve paramam sukham.*²⁹

Then, at the end of seven days, Our Buddha arose from the state of meditation and went from the foot of the *Mucalinda* tree to the *Râjâyatana* tree. There also, he spent seven days with crossed-legged and being sensitive to the bliss of release.

Then, Our Buddha, the giver of peace and the bringer of the best went from the *Ajapâla* banyan tree to the foot of the *Mucalinda* tree after seven days. At the foot of that tree, again being sensitive to the bliss of release, the Buddha dwelt for seven days. While he was dwelling there, an untimely torrential rain fell together with gusts of cold wind. Then, the Serpent King (a *Nâga*) named *Mucalinda* appeared and made a coil around the Buddha's body seven times and kept its hood over the head of the Buddha as to protect the Buddha from cold wind, rain, mosquitoes or gadflies, etc. The rain itself remained for seven days and the King of *Nâga* protected the Buddha continuously for seven days. When the clouds faded away and the sky was clear, the king of *Nâga* unraveled his coils from the body of the Buddha and dropped his own appearance and appeared before the Buddha as a young man with hands joined before his heart, paying homage to the Buddha. Thereupon, the Buddha exclaimed as follows:

"Blissful is solitude
for one who's content,
who has heard the Dhamma,
who sees.
Blissful is non-affliction
with regard for the world,
restraint for living beings.
Blissful is dispassion
with regard for the world,
the overcoming of sensuality.
But the subduing of the conceit "I am"
That is truly the ultimate bliss."

Sukho viveko tutthassa - sutadhammassa passato
Abyâpajjam sukham loke -pânabhutesu samyamo
Sukhâ virâgatâ loke - kâ mânâ nam samatikkamo
*Asmimânassa yo vinayo -etam ve paramam sukham.*²⁹

Then, at the end of seven days, Our Buddha arose from the state of meditation and went from the foot of the *Mucalinda* tree to the *Râjâyatana* tree. There also, he spent seven days with crossed-legged and being sensitive to the bliss of release.

Two Merchants : *Tapussu and Bhallika*

While the Buddha was dwelling there, at the foot of *Rājāyatana* tree, two merchants passed by on their way from the city of *Ukkala* (present day Orissa). Then, a deity who had been one of their relatives in a previous life appeared and said, “Here, my noble friends, at the foot of the *Rājāyatana* tree, is staying the Buddha who has just become the fully enlightened one. Go and show your reverence to him by offering rice-cakes and honey. Long will this be to you for a good and for a blessing.” On hearing this, having taken rice-cake and honey, they went to the Buddha. Having approached him and having respected him, they stood aside. They then said to the Buddha, “May, O Lord, the Blessed One, accept from us these rice-cakes and honey that it may long be to us for a good and for a blessing.”

The Buddha then contemplated upon the traditions of the earlier *Buddhās*. “The *Tathāgatas* do never accept food with their hands. Now, with what shall I accept the rice-cakes and honey?” Thereupon, having understood this reflection of the Buddha, the four great kings of deities from four quarters of the horizon came and offered four bowls made of stone saying, “May O Lord, the Blessed One, accept herewith the rice-cakes and honey!” Then, the Buddha accepted those new stone bowls and thereafter, he received the rice-cakes and honey. According to the *Mahā Vagga* of the Book of Discipline, the Buddha ate rice-cakes and honey and the two merchants went for the refuge of the Buddha and *Dhamma*, because by this time, in the world, there was not yet the *Sangha* of the Buddha. Therefore, these two merchants were known as those who followed only the two refuges.³⁰

After seven days, being sensitive to the bliss of release at the *Rājāyatana* tree, the Buddha then went to the foot of the *Ajapāla* banyan tree.

In accordance with the discourse of *Brahma Sahampati*, in the *Indriya Samyutta* of *The Connected Discourses of the Buddha*, when the Buddha was contemplating alone under the

Two Merchants : *Tapussu and Bhallika*

While the Buddha was dwelling there, at the foot of *Rājāyatana* tree, two merchants passed by on their way from the city of *Ukkala* (present day Orissa). Then, a deity who had been one of their relatives in a previous life appeared and said, “Here, my noble friends, at the foot of the *Rājāyatana* tree, is staying the Buddha who has just become the fully enlightened one. Go and show your reverence to him by offering rice-cakes and honey. Long will this be to you for a good and for a blessing.” On hearing this, having taken rice-cake and honey, they went to the Buddha. Having approached him and having respected him, they stood aside. They then said to the Buddha, “May, O Lord, the Blessed One, accept from us these rice-cakes and honey that it may long be to us for a good and for a blessing.”

The Buddha then contemplated upon the traditions of the earlier *Buddhās*. “The *Tathāgatas* do never accept food with their hands. Now, with what shall I accept the rice-cakes and honey?” Thereupon, having understood this reflection of the Buddha, the four great kings of deities from four quarters of the horizon came and offered four bowls made of stone saying, “May O Lord, the Blessed One, accept herewith the rice-cakes and honey!” Then, the Buddha accepted those new stone bowls and thereafter, he received the rice-cakes and honey. According to the *Mahā Vagga* of the Book of Discipline, the Buddha ate rice-cakes and honey and the two merchants went for the refuge of the Buddha and *Dhamma*, because by this time, in the world, there was not yet the *Sangha* of the Buddha. Therefore, these two merchants were known as those who followed only the two refuges.³⁰

After seven days, being sensitive to the bliss of release at the *Rājāyatana* tree, the Buddha then went to the foot of the *Ajapāla* banyan tree.

In accordance with the discourse of *Brahma Sahampati*, in the *Indriya Samyutta* of *The Connected Discourses of the Buddha*, when the Buddha was contemplating alone under the

Ajapâla banyan tree, a reflection arose in his mind thus: “The five faculties, when developed and cultivated, have the Deathless as their ground, the Deathless as their destination, the Deathless as their final goal. What five faculties? The faculty of faith, the faculty of energy, the faculty of mindfulness, the faculty of concentration, the faculty of wisdom.” Then, *Brahma Sahampati*, having known with his own mind the reflection in the Buddha's mind, just as quickly as a strong man might extend his drawn-in arm or draw in his extended arm, disappeared from the brahma world and reappeared before the Buddha. He arranged his upper robe over one shoulder, extended his joined hands in reverential salutation towards the Buddha and said, “So it is, Blessed One! So it is, Fortunate One!” He further said that while he was living the holy life under the Buddha *Kassapa*, he himself developed and cultivated these same five faculties and eliminated desire for sensual pleasures and with the breaking up of the body, after death, he was reborn in a good destination in the brahma world.³¹

In *The Connected Discourses of the Buddha* it self, in accordance with the *Brahma Sutta* of the *Satipatthâna Samyutta*, while the Buddha was contemplating alone at the foot of this same *Ajapâla* tree, he had a thought thus: “For the purification of beings, for the overcoming of sorrow and lamentation, for the disappearance of pain and grief, for the entering of the path, and for the attainment of *Nibbâna*, this is the only way. That is: the four establishments of mindfulness. What four? The contemplation on the body as body; the contemplation on feeling as feeling; the contemplation on mind as mind; and the contemplation on mental objects as mental objects.”

Here also, it is mentioned that the *Brahma Sahampati* was delighted by the perception of this great thought of the Buddha.³²

As the *Tapokamma Sutta* of the *Mâra Samyutta* in *The Connected Discourses*, the Buddha points out that while he was contemplating at the foot of this same *Ajapâla* tree,

Ajapâla banyan tree, a reflection arose in his mind thus: “The five faculties, when developed and cultivated, have the Deathless as their ground, the Deathless as their destination, the Deathless as their final goal. What five faculties? The faculty of faith, the faculty of energy, the faculty of mindfulness, the faculty of concentration, the faculty of wisdom.” Then, *Brahma Sahampati*, having known with his own mind the reflection in the Buddha's mind, just as quickly as a strong man might extend his drawn-in arm or draw in his extended arm, disappeared from the brahma world and reappeared before the Buddha. He arranged his upper robe over one shoulder, extended his joined hands in reverential salutation towards the Buddha and said, “So it is, Blessed One! So it is, Fortunate One!” He further said that while he was living the holy life under the Buddha *Kassapa*, he himself developed and cultivated these same five faculties and eliminated desire for sensual pleasures and with the breaking up of the body, after death, he was reborn in a good destination in the brahma world.³¹

In *The Connected Discourses of the Buddha* it self, in accordance with the *Brahma Sutta* of the *Satipatthâna Samyutta*, while the Buddha was contemplating alone at the foot of this same *Ajapâla* tree, he had a thought thus: “For the purification of beings, for the overcoming of sorrow and lamentation, for the disappearance of pain and grief, for the entering of the path, and for the attainment of *Nibbâna*, this is the only way. That is: the four establishments of mindfulness. What four? The contemplation on the body as body; the contemplation on feeling as feeling; the contemplation on mind as mind; and the contemplation on mental objects as mental objects.”

Here also, it is mentioned that the *Brahma Sahampati* was delighted by the perception of this great thought of the Buddha.³²

As the *Tapokamma Sutta* of the *Mâra Samyutta* in *The Connected Discourses*, the Buddha points out that while he was contemplating at the foot of this same *Ajapâla* tree,

a great thought arose in him thus; “I am truly free from that grueling asceticism. It is good indeed that I am freed from that useless grueling asceticism! It is good that steady and mindful; I have attained enlightenment! That is wonderful!” Then, *Mâra*, the Evil One, having understood this great thought of the Buddha, approached him and said in verse:

"Having deviated from the austere practices
By which men purify themselves
Being impure you think you're pure;
You have missed the path to purity."

Then, having understood that it was *Mâra*, the Buddha said:

"Having known as useless any austerity
Aimed at the immortal state,
That all such penances are futile
Like oars and rudder on dry land,
By developing the path to enlightenment -
Virtue, concentration, and wisdom -
I have attained supreme purity:
You're defeated, End-maker!"

Then, the *Mâra*, the Evil One realized that the Buddha knew him; the Fortunate One knew him. Being sad and disappointed, *Mâra* disappeared right there.³³

Thus, Our Buddha, the supremely Self-Awakened One realized every aspect of things as they really are based on the Four Noble Truths, namely *unsatisfactoriness*, the cause of *unsatisfactoriness*, the cessation of *unsatisfactoriness*, and the path leading to the cessation of *unsatisfactoriness*. Together with this, he realized the central teaching and further he realized the Dependent Origination, which shows the relationship and causality of all things, as well as the Three Characteristics of Existence of all phenomena in the world. These are the major three principles that he rediscovered as the Dhamma. Since he realized these Dhamma without the help of any human, *devâ*, *brahmâ*, or any other, he is called the Perfectly Self-Awakened One (*Sammâ Sambuddha*).

a great thought arose in him thus; “I am truly free from that grueling asceticism. It is good indeed that I am freed from that useless grueling asceticism! It is good that steady and mindful; I have attained enlightenment! That is wonderful!” Then, *Mâra*, the Evil One, having understood this great thought of the Buddha, approached him and said in verse:

"Having deviated from the austere practices
By which men purify themselves
Being impure you think you're pure;
You have missed the path to purity."

Then, having understood that it was *Mâra*, the Buddha said:

"Having known as useless any austerity
Aimed at the immortal state,
That all such penances are futile
Like oars and rudder on dry land,
By developing the path to enlightenment -
Virtue, concentration, and wisdom -
I have attained supreme purity:
You're defeated, End-maker!"

Then, the *Mâra*, the Evil One realized that the Buddha knew him; the Fortunate One knew him. Being sad and disappointed, *Mâra* disappeared right there.³³

Thus, Our Buddha, the supremely Self-Awakened One realized every aspect of things as they really are based on the Four Noble Truths, namely *unsatisfactoriness*, the cause of *unsatisfactoriness*, the cessation of *unsatisfactoriness*, and the path leading to the cessation of *unsatisfactoriness*. Together with this, he realized the central teaching and further he realized the Dependent Origination, which shows the relationship and causality of all things, as well as the Three Characteristics of Existence of all phenomena in the world. These are the major three principles that he rediscovered as the Dhamma. Since he realized these Dhamma without the help of any human, *devâ*, *brahmâ*, or any other, he is called the Perfectly Self-Awakened One (*Sammâ Sambuddha*).

Quest of a Teacher Under the Shade of the Ajapâla Tree

According to the discourse 'Reverence' of the *Brahma Samyutta* in *The Connected Discourses of the Buddha*, after the attainment of self-awakening, while the Buddha was alone in seclusion under the shade of the *Ajapâla* tree, a reflection arose in him. "One dwells in suffering if one is without reverence and deference. Now, what ascetic or *brahmin* can I honor and respect and dwell in dependence on?" Then, the Buddha did a survey of the world with his divine wisdom, but he could find none in the whole three systems of the world who was superior to him to be respected as his teacher.

Since he could not find any in this world, with its *devâs*, *Mâras*, and *Brahma*, in this generation with its ascetics and *brahmins*, its *devâs* and humans, more perfect in virtue than himself, developed and perfected in aggregate of concentration than himself, or more perfect in wisdom than himself, or more perfect in liberation than himself or in the knowledge and vision of liberation than himself, he finally decided to honor, respect, and dwell in dependence on this very Dhamma to which he had fully awakened as his guru (teacher). In this manner, he considered the Dhamma as his teacher as it was the tradition of the previous Buddhas as well.³⁴

Realizing the Profundity of the Rediscovered Dhamma

In accordance with the Code of Discipline, the *Discourse of the Noble Quest* of *The Middle Length Sayings of the Buddha* and the *Discourse of the Request of the Brahma* in *The Connected Discourses of the Buddha*, it was under this same *Ajapâla* tree that the Buddha was a bit reluctant to share the Dhamma that he rediscovered. The Buddha thought, "This Dhamma that I have discovered is deep, hard to see, hard to understand, peaceful and sublime, not within the sphere of

Quest of a Teacher Under the Shade of the Ajapâla Tree

According to the discourse 'Reverence' of the *Brahma Samyutta* in *The Connected Discourses of the Buddha*, after the attainment of self-awakening, while the Buddha was alone in seclusion under the shade of the *Ajapâla* tree, a reflection arose in him. "One dwells in suffering if one is without reverence and deference. Now, what ascetic or *brahmin* can I honor and respect and dwell in dependence on?" Then, the Buddha did a survey of the world with his divine wisdom, but he could find none in the whole three systems of the world who was superior to him to be respected as his teacher.

Since he could not find any in this world, with its *devâs*, *Mâras*, and *Brahma*, in this generation with its ascetics and *brahmins*, its *devâs* and humans, more perfect in virtue than himself, developed and perfected in aggregate of concentration than himself, or more perfect in wisdom than himself, or more perfect in liberation than himself or in the knowledge and vision of liberation than himself, he finally decided to honor, respect, and dwell in dependence on this very Dhamma to which he had fully awakened as his guru (teacher). In this manner, he considered the Dhamma as his teacher as it was the tradition of the previous Buddhas as well.³⁴

Realizing the Profundity of the Rediscovered Dhamma

In accordance with the Code of Discipline, the *Discourse of the Noble Quest* of *The Middle Length Sayings of the Buddha* and the *Discourse of the Request of the Brahma* in *The Connected Discourses of the Buddha*, it was under this same *Ajapâla* tree that the Buddha was a bit reluctant to share the Dhamma that he rediscovered. The Buddha thought, "This Dhamma that I have discovered is deep, hard to see, hard to understand, peaceful and sublime, not within the sphere of

reasoning, subtle, to be experienced by the wise. But this generation delights in clinging, takes delight in clinging, and rejoices in clinging. For such a generation this state is hard to see, that is, specific conditionality, dependent origination. And this state too is hard to see, that is, the stilling of all formations, the relinquishment of all acquisitions, the destruction of craving, dispassion, cessation, *Nibbâna*. If I were to teach the Dhamma and if others would not understand me, that would be wearisome for me, that would be troublesome.”

At that time, these astounding verses, not heard before in the past, occurred to the Blessed One:

Enough now with trying to teach
What I found with so much hardship;
This Dhamma is not easily understood
By those oppressed by lust and hate.
Those fired by lust, obscured by darkness,
Will never see this abstruse Dhamma,
Deep, hard to see, subtle,
Going against the stream.

Thereafter, *Brahma Sahampati*, having known with his own mind the reflection in the Buddha's mind, came to the Buddha and having arranged his upper robe over his shoulder and kneeling down with his right knee on the ground, and keeping his joined hands on his forehead in reverential salutation towards the Buddha said, “Venerable sir, let the Blessed One teach the Dhamma; let the Fortunate One teach the Dhamma. There are beings with little dust in their eyes who are falling away because they do not hear the Dhamma. There will be those who will understand the Dhamma.”

Then, the Buddha, having contemplated upon the request of the Brahma, out of compassion for multitudes of beings, surveyed the world with his Buddha-Eye. Then, he saw beings with little dust in their eyes, and with much dust in their eyes, with keen faculties and with dull faculties, with good qualities and with bad qualities, easy to teach and

reasoning, subtle, to be experienced by the wise. But this generation delights in clinging, takes delight in clinging, and rejoices in clinging. For such a generation this state is hard to see, that is, specific conditionality, dependent origination. And this state too is hard to see, that is, the stilling of all formations, the relinquishment of all acquisitions, the destruction of craving, dispassion, cessation, *Nibbâna*. If I were to teach the Dhamma and if others would not understand me, that would be wearisome for me, that would be troublesome.”

At that time, these astounding verses, not heard before in the past, occurred to the Blessed One:

Enough now with trying to teach
What I found with so much hardship;
This Dhamma is not easily understood
By those oppressed by lust and hate.
Those fired by lust, obscured by darkness,
Will never see this abstruse Dhamma,
Deep, hard to see, subtle,
Going against the stream.

Thereafter, *Brahma Sahampati*, having known with his own mind the reflection in the Buddha's mind, came to the Buddha and having arranged his upper robe over his shoulder and kneeling down with his right knee on the ground, and keeping his joined hands on his forehead in reverential salutation towards the Buddha said, “Venerable sir, let the Blessed One teach the Dhamma; let the Fortunate One teach the Dhamma. There are beings with little dust in their eyes who are falling away because they do not hear the Dhamma. There will be those who will understand the Dhamma.”

Then, the Buddha, having contemplated upon the request of the Brahma, out of compassion for multitudes of beings, surveyed the world with his Buddha-Eye. Then, he saw beings with little dust in their eyes, and with much dust in their eyes, with keen faculties and with dull faculties, with good qualities and with bad qualities, easy to teach and

difficult to teach, and some who dwelt seeing fear of the world beyond and some were not seeing fear of the world beyond just as in a pond of blue or red or white lotus flowers. Some lotus flowers might be born in the water, grow up in the water, and thrive while submerged in the water without rising up from the water; some of them might be born in the water, grow up in the water, and stand at an even level with the water; some lotus flowers might be born in the water and grow up in the water, but would rise up from the water and stand without being soiled by the water so too surveying the world with the eye of a Buddha. The Buddha saw beings with little dust in their eyes and with much dust in their eyes, with keen faculties and with dull faculties, with good qualities and with bad qualities, easy to teach and hard to teach, and some who dwelt seeing fear of the world beyond and some were not seeing fear of the world beyond. In accordance with this, the Buddha decided to proclaim the rediscovered Dhamma to the world as his maiden discourse.³⁵

According to the Great Chapter of the Code of Discipline, the Buddha then considered to whom the Dhamma should be taught first. He wanted to teach the Dhamma to the persons who quickly understand it. He wished to teach the Dhamma to *Alâra Kâlâma*, from whom he learned how to practice and develop the first seven *jhânas*. Then, he realized that *Alâra Kâlâma* had died seven days ago. Thereupon, he contemplated upon his next teacher, *Uddakarâma Putta*, because of his quick-wittedness, under whom he learned how to practice and develop neither-perception-nor-non-perception. Unfortunately, he also had died on the same night, confirmed a certain deity. Thereafter, the Buddha decided to teach the Dhamma to the five ascetics with whom he practiced severe austerities. The Buddha then contemplated and understood that they were dwelling at a place called *Isipatana Migadâya* in *Vâranasi*. It was because of that the Buddha came to *Isipatana* in *Vâranasi* to teach the Dhamma all the way from *Uruvela, Buddhagayâ*.

difficult to teach, and some who dwelt seeing fear of the world beyond and some were not seeing fear of the world beyond just as in a pond of blue or red or white lotus flowers. Some lotus flowers might be born in the water, grow up in the water, and thrive while submerged in the water without rising up from the water; some of them might be born in the water, grow up in the water, and stand at an even level with the water; some lotus flowers might be born in the water and grow up in the water, but would rise up from the water and stand without being soiled by the water so too surveying the world with the eye of a Buddha. The Buddha saw beings with little dust in their eyes and with much dust in their eyes, with keen faculties and with dull faculties, with good qualities and with bad qualities, easy to teach and hard to teach, and some who dwelt seeing fear of the world beyond and some were not seeing fear of the world beyond. In accordance with this, the Buddha decided to proclaim the rediscovered Dhamma to the world as his maiden discourse.³⁵

According to the Great Chapter of the Code of Discipline, the Buddha then considered to whom the Dhamma should be taught first. He wanted to teach the Dhamma to the persons who quickly understand it. He wished to teach the Dhamma to *Alâra Kâlâma*, from whom he learned how to practice and develop the first seven *jhânas*. Then, he realized that *Alâra Kâlâma* had died seven days ago. Thereupon, he contemplated upon his next teacher, *Uddakarâma Putta*, because of his quick-wittedness, under whom he learned how to practice and develop neither-perception-nor-non-perception. Unfortunately, he also had died on the same night, confirmed a certain deity. Thereafter, the Buddha decided to teach the Dhamma to the five ascetics with whom he practiced severe austerities. The Buddha then contemplated and understood that they were dwelling at a place called *Isipatana Migadâya* in *Vâranasi*. It was because of that the Buddha came to *Isipatana* in *Vâranasi* to teach the Dhamma all the way from *Uruvela, Buddhagayâ*.

Meeting with the Wanderer Upaka

The Buddha departed *Gayâ* to visit *Vâranasi* with the view of teaching the Dhamma to the five ascetics. On the way, between *Gayâ* and the place of enlightenment, he met a wanderer named *Upaka*. The Buddha said, “Then, *bhikkhus*, when I had stayed at *Uruvela* as long as I chose, I set out to wander by stages to Benares [*Vâranasi*]. Between *Gâya* and the Place of enlightenment, the *Ajivaka Upaka* saw me on the road and said: “Friend, your faculties are clear, the color of your skin is pure and bright. Under whom have you gone forth, friend? Who is your teacher? Whose Dhamma do you profess? I replied to the *Ajivaka Upaka* in stanzas:

I am one who has transcended all, a knower of all,
Unsullied among all things, renouncing all,
By craving's ceasing freed. Having known this all
For myself, to whom should I point as teacher?

I have no teacher, and one like me
Exists nowhere in all the world
With all its gods, because I have
No person for my counterpart.

I am the Accomplished One in the world,
I am the Teacher Supreme.
I alone am a Fully Enlightened One
Whose fires are quenched and extinguished.

I go now to the city of Kasi
To set in motion the Wheel of Dhamma.
In a world that has become blind
I go to beat the drum of the Deathless.

Then *Upaka* said, “By your claims, friend, you ought to be the Universal Victor.”

The Buddha said,

The victors are those like me
Who have won the destruction of taints.

Meeting with the Wanderer Upaka

The Buddha departed *Gayâ* to visit *Vâranasi* with the view of teaching the Dhamma to the five ascetics. On the way, between *Gayâ* and the place of enlightenment, he met a wanderer named *Upaka*. The Buddha said, “Then, *bhikkhus*, when I had stayed at *Uruvela* as long as I chose, I set out to wander by stages to Benares [*Vâranasi*]. Between *Gâya* and the Place of enlightenment, the *Ajivaka Upaka* saw me on the road and said: “Friend, your faculties are clear, the color of your skin is pure and bright. Under whom have you gone forth, friend? Who is your teacher? Whose Dhamma do you profess? I replied to the *Ajivaka Upaka* in stanzas:

I am one who has transcended all, a knower of all,
Unsullied among all things, renouncing all,
By craving's ceasing freed. Having known this all
For myself, to whom should I point as teacher?

I have no teacher, and one like me
Exists nowhere in all the world
With all its gods, because I have
No person for my counterpart.

I am the Accomplished One in the world,
I am the Teacher Supreme.
I alone am a Fully Enlightened One
Whose fires are quenched and extinguished.

I go now to the city of Kasi
To set in motion the Wheel of Dhamma.
In a world that has become blind
I go to beat the drum of the Deathless.

Then *Upaka* said, “By your claims, friend, you ought to be the Universal Victor.”

The Buddha said,

The victors are those like me
Who have won the destruction of taints.

I have vanquished all evil states,
Therefore, *Upaka*, I am a victor.

"When this was said, the *Ajivaka Upaka* said: "May it be so, friend." Shaking his head, *Upaka* took a bypath and departed.

Oh! See the danger of this *samsâric* journey! How unfortunate was he? Even after meeting the Supreme Buddha he could not listen and understand the well-expounded Dhamma and realize *Nibbâna*! What a misfortune?

The Buddha then approached *Isipatana* of *Migadâya* in *Varânasi* and it was on the full moon of July, the day that he completed the two months of his enlightenment. When it was evening, addressing the five disciples namely; *Kondañña*, *Vappa*, *Bhaddiya*, *Mahânâma* and *Assaji* the Buddha delivered his first sermon as the *Setting in Motion the Wheel of the Dhamma (Dhammacakkapavattana Sutta)* and proclaimed the Dhamma for the first time to the world.

The Buddha's First Sermon

Our Buddha, in delivering the first sermon to these five ascetics at *Vârânasi* on that full moon day of July, explicitly declared that there were two extremes in the world, which were to be avoided and reiterated the significance of following the Middle Path. The Buddha's first words were, "Dve me *Bhikkhave antâ pabbajitena na sevitabbâ*." Meanings, Monks, there are these two extremes, which are to be avoided by the practitioners. This voice of the Dhamma, the voice of the Noblest One, the Buddha, resonated not only on the earth but also in the ten thousand-world systems. By the same token, there was an unprecedented and immeasurable bright light in the world. This account of sound and light is given at the end of the same discourse.³⁶

Together with his full enlightenment, Our Buddha was endowed with an unparalleled special Ten Powers. These ten powers are also to be understood by all of us. These are explicated by the Buddha for Venerable *Sâriputta*, in the

I have vanquished all evil states,
Therefore, *Upaka*, I am a victor.

"When this was said, the *Ajivaka Upaka* said: "May it be so, friend." Shaking his head, *Upaka* took a bypath and departed.

Oh! See the danger of this *samsâric* journey! How unfortunate was he? Even after meeting the Supreme Buddha he could not listen and understand the well-expounded Dhamma and realize *Nibbâna*! What a misfortune?

The Buddha then approached *Isipatana* of *Migadâya* in *Varânasi* and it was on the full moon of July, the day that he completed the two months of his enlightenment. When it was evening, addressing the five disciples namely; *Kondañña*, *Vappa*, *Bhaddiya*, *Mahânâma* and *Assaji* the Buddha delivered his first sermon as the *Setting in Motion the Wheel of the Dhamma (Dhammacakkapavattana Sutta)* and proclaimed the Dhamma for the first time to the world.

The Buddha's First Sermon

Our Buddha, in delivering the first sermon to these five ascetics at *Vârânasi* on that full moon day of July, explicitly declared that there were two extremes in the world, which were to be avoided and reiterated the significance of following the Middle Path. The Buddha's first words were, "Dve me *Bhikkhave antâ pabbajitena na sevitabbâ*." Meanings, Monks, there are these two extremes, which are to be avoided by the practitioners. This voice of the Dhamma, the voice of the Noblest One, the Buddha, resonated not only on the earth but also in the ten thousand-world systems. By the same token, there was an unprecedented and immeasurable bright light in the world. This account of sound and light is given at the end of the same discourse.³⁶

Together with his full enlightenment, Our Buddha was endowed with an unparalleled special Ten Powers. These ten powers are also to be understood by all of us. These are explicated by the Buddha for Venerable *Sâriputta*, in the

Great Discourse of the Lion's Roar: Mahâ Sihanâda Sutta of The Middle Length Sayings of the Buddha. Such a Buddha who possesses the Ten Powers is extremely rare in the world.

Our Buddha is Endowed with Ten Powers

(1). Our Supreme buddha teaches us as it is, what is possible as possible and what is impossible as impossible. That is the first power with which he is endowed. That is one of the powers of the *Tathâgata* (Buddha). The Buddha taught what is possible as possible and impossible as impossible to Venerable *Ananda* in the *Discourse of Many Kinds of Elements of The Middle Length Sayings of the Buddha*.³⁷ Here, addressing the Venerable *Ananda*, the Buddha said,

“Here, *Ananda*, it is impossible, it cannot happen that a person possessing right view could treat any formation as permanent - there is no such possibility. But, it is possible that an ordinary person might treat some formation as permanent - there is such a possibility.

It is impossible, it cannot happen that a person possessing right view could treat any formation as pleasurable - there is no such possibility. But it is possible that an ordinary person might treat some formation as pleasurable - there is such a possibility.

It is impossible, it cannot happen that a person possessing right view could treat anything as self - there is no such possibility. But it is possible that an ordinary person might treat something as self - there is such a possibility.

It is impossible, it cannot happen that a person possessing right view could deprive his mother of life - there is no such possibility. But it is possible that an ordinary person might deprive his mother of life - there is such a possibility.

It is impossible, it cannot happen that a person possessing right view could deprive his father of life, ... could deprive an *arahant* of life - there is no such possibility.

Great Discourse of the Lion's Roar: Mahâ Sihanâda Sutta of The Middle Length Sayings of the Buddha. Such a Buddha who possesses the Ten Powers is extremely rare in the world.

Our Buddha is Endowed with Ten Powers

(1). Our Supreme buddha teaches us as it is, what is possible as possible and what is impossible as impossible. That is the first power with which he is endowed. That is one of the powers of the *Tathâgata* (Buddha). The Buddha taught what is possible as possible and impossible as impossible to Venerable *Ananda* in the *Discourse of Many Kinds of Elements of The Middle Length Sayings of the Buddha*.³⁷ Here, addressing the Venerable *Ananda*, the Buddha said,

“Here, *Ananda*, it is impossible, it cannot happen that a person possessing right view could treat any formation as permanent - there is no such possibility. But, it is possible that an ordinary person might treat some formation as permanent - there is such a possibility.

It is impossible, it cannot happen that a person possessing right view could treat any formation as pleasurable - there is no such possibility. But it is possible that an ordinary person might treat some formation as pleasurable - there is such a possibility.

It is impossible, it cannot happen that a person possessing right view could treat anything as self - there is no such possibility. But it is possible that an ordinary person might treat something as self - there is such a possibility.

It is impossible, it cannot happen that a person possessing right view could deprive his mother of life - there is no such possibility. But it is possible that an ordinary person might deprive his mother of life - there is such a possibility.

It is impossible, it cannot happen that a person possessing right view could deprive his father of life, ... could deprive an *arahant* of life - there is no such possibility.

It is impossible, it cannot happen that a person possessing right view could, with a mind of hate, shed a *Tathâgata's* blood - there is no such possibility. But it is possible that an ordinary person might, with a mind of hate, shed a *Tathâgata's* blood - there is such a possibility.

It is impossible, it cannot happen that a person possessing right view could cause a schism in the *Sangha* ... could acknowledge another teacher - there is no such possibility.

It is possible that an ordinary person might cause a schism in the *Sangha* ... might acknowledge another teacher - there is such a possibility.

It is impossible, it cannot happen that two Accomplished Ones, Fully Enlightened Ones, could arise contemporaneously in one world-system - there is no such possibility.

It is possible that one Accomplished One, a Fully Enlightened One, might arise in one world-system - there is such a possibility.

It is impossible, it cannot happen that two Wheel-Turning Monarchs could arise contemporaneously in one world-system ... It is possible that one Wheel-Turning Monarch might arise in one world - there is such a possibility.

It is impossible, it cannot happen that a woman could be an Accomplished One, a Fully Enlightened One - there is no such possibility. But it is possible that a man might be an Accomplished One, a Fully Enlightened One - there is such a possibility.

It is impossible, it cannot happen that a woman could be a Wheel-Turning Monarch ... that a woman could occupy the position of *Sakka* ... that a woman could occupy the position of *Mâra* ... that a woman could occupy the position of *Brahmâ* - there is no such possibility. But it is possible that a man might be a Wheel-Turning Monarch ... that a man might occupy the position of *Sakka* ... that a man might occupy the

It is impossible, it cannot happen that a person possessing right view could, with a mind of hate, shed a *Tathâgata's* blood - there is no such possibility. But it is possible that an ordinary person might, with a mind of hate, shed a *Tathâgata's* blood - there is such a possibility.

It is impossible, it cannot happen that a person possessing right view could cause a schism in the *Sangha* ... could acknowledge another teacher - there is no such possibility.

It is possible that an ordinary person might cause a schism in the *Sangha* ... might acknowledge another teacher - there is such a possibility.

It is impossible, it cannot happen that two Accomplished Ones, Fully Enlightened Ones, could arise contemporaneously in one world-system - there is no such possibility.

It is possible that one Accomplished One, a Fully Enlightened One, might arise in one world-system - there is such a possibility.

It is impossible, it cannot happen that two Wheel-Turning Monarchs could arise contemporaneously in one world-system ... It is possible that one Wheel-Turning Monarch might arise in one world - there is such a possibility.

It is impossible, it cannot happen that a woman could be an Accomplished One, a Fully Enlightened One - there is no such possibility. But it is possible that a man might be an Accomplished One, a Fully Enlightened One - there is such a possibility.

It is impossible, it cannot happen that a woman could be a Wheel-Turning Monarch ... that a woman could occupy the position of *Sakka* ... that a woman could occupy the position of *Mâra* ... that a woman could occupy the position of *Brahmâ* - there is no such possibility. But it is possible that a man might be a Wheel-Turning Monarch ... that a man might occupy the position of *Sakka* ... that a man might occupy the

position of *Mâra* ... that a man might occupy the position of *Brahmâ* - there is such a possibility.

It is impossible; it cannot happen that an unwished for, undesired, disagreeable result could be produced from good bodily conduct ... from good verbal conduct ... from good mental conduct - there is no such possibility. But it is possible that a wished for, desired, agreeable result might be produced from good bodily conduct ... from good verbal conduct ... from good mental conduct - there is such a possibility.

It is impossible; it cannot happen that a person engaging in bodily misconduct ... engaging in verbal misconduct ... engaging in mental misconduct could on that account, for that reason, on the dissolution of the body, after death, reappear in a happy destination, even in the heavenly world - there is no such possibility. But it is possible that a person engaging in bodily misconduct ... engaging in verbal misconduct ... engaging in mental misconduct might on that account, for that reason, on the dissolution of the body, after death, reappear in a state of deprivation, in an unhappy destination, in perdition, even in hell - there is such a possibility.

It is impossible, it cannot happen that a person engaging in good bodily conduct ... engaging in good verbal conduct ... engaging in good mental conduct could on that account, for that reason, on the dissolution of the body, after death, reappear in a state of deprivation, in an unhappy destination, in perdition, even in hell - there is no such possibility. But it is possible that a person engaging in good bodily conduct ... engaging in good verbal conduct ... engaging in good mental conduct might on that account, for that reason, on the dissolution of the body, after death, reappear in a happy destination, even in the heavenly world. *Bhikkhu* can be called skilled in what is possible and what is impossible.”

This explanation is given in the first chapter of *The Numerical Discourses of the Buddha* in twenty-eight short discourses respectively.

position of *Mâra* ... that a man might occupy the position of *Brahmâ* - there is such a possibility.

It is impossible; it cannot happen that an unwished for, undesired, disagreeable result could be produced from good bodily conduct ... from good verbal conduct ... from good mental conduct - there is no such possibility. But it is possible that a wished for, desired, agreeable result might be produced from good bodily conduct ... from good verbal conduct ... from good mental conduct - there is such a possibility.

It is impossible; it cannot happen that a person engaging in bodily misconduct ... engaging in verbal misconduct ... engaging in mental misconduct could on that account, for that reason, on the dissolution of the body, after death, reappear in a happy destination, even in the heavenly world - there is no such possibility. But it is possible that a person engaging in bodily misconduct ... engaging in verbal misconduct ... engaging in mental misconduct might on that account, for that reason, on the dissolution of the body, after death, reappear in a state of deprivation, in an unhappy destination, in perdition, even in hell - there is such a possibility.

It is impossible, it cannot happen that a person engaging in good bodily conduct ... engaging in good verbal conduct ... engaging in good mental conduct could on that account, for that reason, on the dissolution of the body, after death, reappear in a state of deprivation, in an unhappy destination, in perdition, even in hell - there is no such possibility. But it is possible that a person engaging in good bodily conduct ... engaging in good verbal conduct ... engaging in good mental conduct might on that account, for that reason, on the dissolution of the body, after death, reappear in a happy destination, even in the heavenly world. *Bhikkhu* can be called skilled in what is possible and what is impossible.”

This explanation is given in the first chapter of *The Numerical Discourses of the Buddha* in twenty-eight short discourses respectively.

(2). The *Tathâgata* (Buddha) understands as it actually is the results of actions undertaken, past, future, and present, with possibilities and with causes. That too is a *Tathâgata's* power.

(3). The *Tathâgata* understands as it actually is the ways leading to all destinations. That too is a *Tathâgata's* power.

(4). The *Tathâgata* understands as it actually is the world with its many and different elements. That too is a *Tathâgata's* power.

(5). The *Tathâgata* understands as it actually is how beings have different inclinations. That too is a *Tathâgata's* power.

(6). The *Tathâgata* understands as it actually is the disposition of the faculties of other beings, other persons. That too is a *Tathâgata's* power.

(7). The *Tathâgata* understands as it actually is the defilement, the cleansing, and the emergence in regard to the *jhânas*, liberations, concentrations, and attainments. That too is a *Tathâgata's* power.

(8). The *Tathâgata* recollects his manifold past lives, that is, one birth, two births ... Thus with their aspects and particulars he recollects his manifold past lives. That too is a *Tathâgata's* power.

(9). Again, with the divine eye, which is purified and surpasses the human, the *Tathâgata* sees beings passing away and reappearing, inferior and superior, fair and ugly, fortunate and unfortunate ... and he understands how beings pass on according to their actions. That too is a *Tathâgata's* power.

(10). Again, by realizing for himself with direct knowledge, the *Tathâgata* here and now enters upon and abides in the deliverance of mind and deliverance by wisdom that are taintless with the destruction of the taints. That too is a *Tathâgata's* power that the *Tathâgata* has, by virtue of which he claims the herd-leader's place, roars his lion's roar in the assemblies, and sets rolling the Wheel of Brahma.

(2). The *Tathâgata* (Buddha) understands as it actually is the results of actions undertaken, past, future, and present, with possibilities and with causes. That too is a *Tathâgata's* power.

(3). The *Tathâgata* understands as it actually is the ways leading to all destinations. That too is a *Tathâgata's* power.

(4). The *Tathâgata* understands as it actually is the world with its many and different elements. That too is a *Tathâgata's* power.

(5). The *Tathâgata* understands as it actually is how beings have different inclinations. That too is a *Tathâgata's* power.

(6). The *Tathâgata* understands as it actually is the disposition of the faculties of other beings, other persons. That too is a *Tathâgata's* power.

(7). The *Tathâgata* understands as it actually is the defilement, the cleansing, and the emergence in regard to the *jhânas*, liberations, concentrations, and attainments. That too is a *Tathâgata's* power.

(8). The *Tathâgata* recollects his manifold past lives, that is, one birth, two births ... Thus with their aspects and particulars he recollects his manifold past lives. That too is a *Tathâgata's* power.

(9). Again, with the divine eye, which is purified and surpasses the human, the *Tathâgata* sees beings passing away and reappearing, inferior and superior, fair and ugly, fortunate and unfortunate ... and he understands how beings pass on according to their actions. That too is a *Tathâgata's* power.

(10). Again, by realizing for himself with direct knowledge, the *Tathâgata* here and now enters upon and abides in the deliverance of mind and deliverance by wisdom that are taintless with the destruction of the taints. That too is a *Tathâgata's* power that the *Tathâgata* has, by virtue of which he claims the herd-leader's place, roars his lion's roar in the assemblies, and sets rolling the Wheel of Brahma.

The Tathâgata has these ten Tathâgata's powers, possessing which he claims the herd-leader's place, roars his lion's roar in the assemblies, and sets rolling the Wheel of Brahma."³⁸

Those are the ten powers of Our Buddha.

Our Buddha is Endowed with Four Intrepidities

Since the Buddha had four great intrepidities, he had the firm self-confidence to visit any congregation without any hesitation. Therefore, he fearlessly visited any group and addressed them all with full confidence. As given in the Great Discourse of the Lion's Roar of *The Middle Length Sayings of the Buddha* itself, those four intrepidities are as follows. Let us listen to the Buddha:

"*Sâriputta*, the *Tathâgata* has these four kinds of intrepidity, possessing which he claims the herd-leader's place, roars his lion's roar in the assemblies, and sets rolling the Wheel of Brahma. What are the four?

"Here, I see no ground on which any recluse or *brahmin* or god or *Mâra* or Brahma or anyone else at all in the world could, in accordance with the Dhamma, accuse me thus: "While you claim full enlightenment, you are not fully enlightened in regard to certain things." And seeing no ground for that, I abide in safety, fearlessness, and intrepidity.

"I see no ground on which any recluse or *brahmin* or god or *Mâra* or Brahma or anyone else at all could accuse me thus: "While you claim to have destroyed the taints, these taints are undestroyed by you." And seeing no ground for that, I abide in safety, fearlessness, and intrepidity.

"I see no ground on which any recluse or *brahmin* or god or *Mâra* or Brahma or anyone at all could accuse me thus: "Those things called obstructions by you are not able to obstruct one who engages in them." And seeing no ground for that, I abide in safety, fearlessness, and intrepidity.

"I see no ground on which any recluse or *brahmin* or god or

The Tathâgata has these ten Tathâgata's powers, possessing which he claims the herd-leader's place, roars his lion's roar in the assemblies, and sets rolling the Wheel of Brahma."³⁸

Those are the ten powers of Our Buddha.

Our Buddha is Endowed with Four Intrepidities

Since the Buddha had four great intrepidities, he had the firm self-confidence to visit any congregation without any hesitation. Therefore, he fearlessly visited any group and addressed them all with full confidence. As given in the Great Discourse of the Lion's Roar of *The Middle Length Sayings of the Buddha* itself, those four intrepidities are as follows. Let us listen to the Buddha:

"*Sâriputta*, the *Tathâgata* has these four kinds of intrepidity, possessing which he claims the herd-leader's place, roars his lion's roar in the assemblies, and sets rolling the Wheel of Brahma. What are the four?

"Here, I see no ground on which any recluse or *brahmin* or god or *Mâra* or Brahma or anyone else at all in the world could, in accordance with the Dhamma, accuse me thus: "While you claim full enlightenment, you are not fully enlightened in regard to certain things." And seeing no ground for that, I abide in safety, fearlessness, and intrepidity.

"I see no ground on which any recluse or *brahmin* or god or *Mâra* or Brahma or anyone else at all could accuse me thus: "While you claim to have destroyed the taints, these taints are undestroyed by you." And seeing no ground for that, I abide in safety, fearlessness, and intrepidity.

"I see no ground on which any recluse or *brahmin* or god or *Mâra* or Brahma or anyone at all could accuse me thus: "Those things called obstructions by you are not able to obstruct one who engages in them." And seeing no ground for that, I abide in safety, fearlessness, and intrepidity.

"I see no ground on which any recluse or *brahmin* or god or

Mâra or *Brahma* or anyone at all could accuse me thus: “When you teach the Dhamma to someone, it does not lead him when he practices it to the complete destruction of suffering.” And seeing no ground for that, I abide in safety, fearlessness, and intrepidity. A *Tathâgata* has these four kinds of intrepidity, possessing which he claims the herd-leader's place, roars his lion's roar in the assemblies, and sets rolling the Wheel of Brahma.”

In the same discourse, the Buddha pointed out that there are eight assemblies in the world. They are:

The assembly of nobles, the assembly of *brahmins*, the assembly of householders, the assembly of recluses, the assembly of gods of the heaven of the Four Great Kings, the assembly of gods of the heaven of the Thirty-three, the assembly of *Mâra's* retinue, and the assembly of Brahmas.

Possessing these four kinds of intrepidity, the Buddha approached and entered all these eight assemblies.

He says, “I recall having approached many hundred assemblies of nobles, many hundred assemblies of *brahmins*, many hundred assemblies of householders, many hundred assemblies of recluses, many hundred assemblies of gods of the heaven of the Four Great Kings, many hundred assemblies of gods of the heaven of the Thirty-three, many hundred assemblies of *Mâra's* retinue, many hundred assemblies of *Brahmas*. And formerly I had sat with them there and talked with them and held conversations with them, yet I see no ground for thinking that fear or timidity might come upon me there. And seeing no ground for that, I abide in safety, fearlessness, and intrepidity.”

Our Buddha, the Most Excellent and Extraordinary Man Ever Born

The Buddha was born as a human, led a life facing both happiness and suffering as a human, but developed and cultivated his mind to the utmost human perfection. As the result, eventually, being attached to none and repulsed from

Mâra or *Brahma* or anyone at all could accuse me thus: “When you teach the Dhamma to someone, it does not lead him when he practices it to the complete destruction of suffering.” And seeing no ground for that, I abide in safety, fearlessness, and intrepidity. A *Tathâgata* has these four kinds of intrepidity, possessing which he claims the herd-leader's place, roars his lion's roar in the assemblies, and sets rolling the Wheel of Brahma.”

In the same discourse, the Buddha pointed out that there are eight assemblies in the world. They are:

The assembly of nobles, the assembly of *brahmins*, the assembly of householders, the assembly of recluses, the assembly of gods of the heaven of the Four Great Kings, the assembly of gods of the heaven of the Thirty-three, the assembly of *Mâra's* retinue, and the assembly of Brahmas.

Possessing these four kinds of intrepidity, the Buddha approached and entered all these eight assemblies.

He says, “I recall having approached many hundred assemblies of nobles, many hundred assemblies of *brahmins*, many hundred assemblies of householders, many hundred assemblies of recluses, many hundred assemblies of gods of the heaven of the Four Great Kings, many hundred assemblies of gods of the heaven of the Thirty-three, many hundred assemblies of *Mâra's* retinue, many hundred assemblies of *Brahmas*. And formerly I had sat with them there and talked with them and held conversations with them, yet I see no ground for thinking that fear or timidity might come upon me there. And seeing no ground for that, I abide in safety, fearlessness, and intrepidity.”

Our Buddha, the Most Excellent and Extraordinary Man Ever Born

The Buddha was born as a human, led a life facing both happiness and suffering as a human, but developed and cultivated his mind to the utmost human perfection. As the result, eventually, being attached to none and repulsed from

none, he became an extraordinary man, a superman. He led his pure and peaceful life in society for forty-five years like a lotus that is born in the muddy stinking water but comes to the surface and releases its fragrance without being tainted by the foul water. He taught the Dhamma to both humans and deities alike and finally, at the age of eighty, he passed away into *Parinibbâna*, never to be born again anywhere.

The virtuousness of such a marvelous being is certainly immeasurable, unfathomable. Though he was born as human, he himself said to a *brahmin* named *Drona* that he was not an ordinary human but an extraordinary human being.

Once, the Buddha was traveling on a highway between the two cities of *Ukkatthâ* and *Setavyâ*. Then, a certain *brahmin* who was skilled in reading the characteristics of footprints was also traveling on the same highway in the same direction. Seeing the unusual footprints of the Buddha on the sand, the *brahmin* was shocked and started to think deeply. “What? These footprints are strange! I have never seen such footprints. Though they seem to be human, they are completely strange. Shapewise, yes, human, but these should not be of an ordinary man. Who! Who could he be? *Adevâ*? or a *gandhabba*? Or a *yakka*?” Thus, he followed the footprints and saw a completely cool, calm, collected, composed and self-possessed person, the Buddha, sitting under a tree, cross-legged on his four-folded robe. Having seen this great being, he approached the Buddha and inquired. This is the conversation that took place between the Buddha and the *brahmin* then.

Brahmin: Are you a *devâ* (deity)?

Buddha: No, *brahmin*, I am not a *devâ*.

Brahmin: Then, are you a *gandhabba* (musician of gods)?

Buddha: No, *brahmin*, I am not a *gandhabba*.

Brahmin: Are you then, a *yakkha* (devil)?

Buddha: No, *Brahmin*, I am not a *yakkha*.

Brahmin: Are you then, a human?

Buddha: No, *Brahmin*, I am not a human also.

none, he became an extraordinary man, a superman. He led his pure and peaceful life in society for forty-five years like a lotus that is born in the muddy stinking water but comes to the surface and releases its fragrance without being tainted by the foul water. He taught the Dhamma to both humans and deities alike and finally, at the age of eighty, he passed away into *Parinibbâna*, never to be born again anywhere.

The virtuousness of such a marvelous being is certainly immeasurable, unfathomable. Though he was born as human, he himself said to a *brahmin* named *Drona* that he was not an ordinary human but an extraordinary human being.

Once, the Buddha was traveling on a highway between the two cities of *Ukkatthâ* and *Setavyâ*. Then, a certain *brahmin* who was skilled in reading the characteristics of footprints was also traveling on the same highway in the same direction. Seeing the unusual footprints of the Buddha on the sand, the *brahmin* was shocked and started to think deeply. “What? These footprints are strange! I have never seen such footprints. Though they seem to be human, they are completely strange. Shapewise, yes, human, but these should not be of an ordinary man. Who! Who could he be? *Adevâ*? or a *gandhabba*? Or a *yakka*?” Thus, he followed the footprints and saw a completely cool, calm, collected, composed and self-possessed person, the Buddha, sitting under a tree, cross-legged on his four-folded robe. Having seen this great being, he approached the Buddha and inquired. This is the conversation that took place between the Buddha and the *brahmin* then.

Brahmin: Are you a *devâ* (deity)?

Buddha: No, *brahmin*, I am not a *devâ*.

Brahmin: Then, are you a *gandhabba* (musician of gods)?

Buddha: No, *brahmin*, I am not a *gandhabba*.

Brahmin: Are you then, a *yakkha* (devil)?

Buddha: No, *Brahmin*, I am not a *yakkha*.

Brahmin: Are you then, a human?

Buddha: No, *Brahmin*, I am not a human also.

The *Brahmin* was confused and bewildered with this unexpected response of the Buddha. The *Brahmin* said, “When I ask whether you are *devâ*? Sir, you say, 'No I am not a *devâ*.' When I ask whether you are a *gandhabba*, you say, 'I am not a *gandhabba*.' When I ask whether you are a devil, you say 'I am not a devil.' Even when I ask whether you are a human you say, 'I am not a human also.' Then sir, who are you?” Then, Our Buddha told him.

“Meritorious *Brahmin*, if I were a *devâ*, I should have taints such as taints of sensuality. But I completely cut off such taints of sensuality. Therefore, I am not a *devâ*. If I were a musician of gods I should have such taints, which are overwhelming in musicians of gods. Since I have completely cut off such taints, I am not a musician of gods. If I were a devil I should have taints overwhelming in devils. Since I have completely cut off taints, I am not a devil. If I were an ordinary human being, I should have taints, which are overwhelming in ordinary humans. Since I have cut off all taints, I am not an ordinary human being.”

Thereafter, the Buddha gave a beautiful simile that illustrated the nature of the Buddha and gave the proper term to be used to address the Buddha. He said, “*Brahmin*, as if a blue-lotus, white-lotus or a lily when born in the muddy water and comes to the surface of water but stays without smearing mud, I was born in this world among the worldly humans. But I live in society without grasping, attachment or repulsion. Therefore, I am completely free from all human weaknesses. Know that I am the Buddha.”³⁹

Our Buddha was the most insightful, immaculated and supremely enlightened human being. He was endowed and luminous with morality, concentration, wisdom, liberation, and knowledge. Therefore, he was the most excellent human being who was born among the humans in this auspicious eon called “*Bhadra kalpa*.” He was certainly the wonderful and perfect human who awakened his human mind and taught the way to awaken the human mind.

The *Brahmin* was confused and bewildered with this unexpected response of the Buddha. The *Brahmin* said, “When I ask whether you are *devâ*? Sir, you say, 'No I am not a *devâ*.' When I ask whether you are a *gandhabba*, you say, 'I am not a *gandhabba*.' When I ask whether you are a devil, you say 'I am not a devil.' Even when I ask whether you are a human you say, 'I am not a human also.' Then sir, who are you?” Then, Our Buddha told him.

“Meritorious *Brahmin*, if I were a *devâ*, I should have taints such as taints of sensuality. But I completely cut off such taints of sensuality. Therefore, I am not a *devâ*. If I were a musician of gods I should have such taints, which are overwhelming in musicians of gods. Since I have completely cut off such taints, I am not a musician of gods. If I were a devil I should have taints overwhelming in devils. Since I have completely cut off taints, I am not a devil. If I were an ordinary human being, I should have taints, which are overwhelming in ordinary humans. Since I have cut off all taints, I am not an ordinary human being.”

Thereafter, the Buddha gave a beautiful simile that illustrated the nature of the Buddha and gave the proper term to be used to address the Buddha. He said, “*Brahmin*, as if a blue-lotus, white-lotus or a lily when born in the muddy water and comes to the surface of water but stays without smearing mud, I was born in this world among the worldly humans. But I live in society without grasping, attachment or repulsion. Therefore, I am completely free from all human weaknesses. Know that I am the Buddha.”³⁹

Our Buddha was the most insightful, immaculated and supremely enlightened human being. He was endowed and luminous with morality, concentration, wisdom, liberation, and knowledge. Therefore, he was the most excellent human being who was born among the humans in this auspicious eon called “*Bhadra kalpa*.” He was certainly the wonderful and perfect human who awakened his human mind and taught the way to awaken the human mind.

Virtue of the Buddha is Immeasurable and Unfathomable -*Virtues of the Buddha with One Hundred Epithets*

Many different people have talked about the virtues of Our Buddha for the last 2638 years. Are they all finished? Suppose a Buddha starts to describe the qualities, virtues of another Buddha from the very moment of his enlightenment and he continuously describes the virtues for an eon, one day, the eon may come to the end, but not the qualities, virtues of the Buddha. The qualities of the Buddha are unfathomable like the ocean, immeasurable like the waves in the ocean.

Once, a young follower of another faith, named *Upâli*, having understood the virtues of the Buddha composed ten different poems using one hundred epithets to designate the virtues of the Buddha and loudly recited them with delightful heart and full of confidence in the Buddha right in front of his own Master while the Master was shivering, shaking with full of jealousy and hatred. His Master asked him whose disciple are you? Then, the disciple *Upâli* composed these hymns of praise. Those hundred epithets are as follows:

“He is the Wise One (1.*Dira*); who has cast off delusion (2.*Vigatamoha*); abandoned the dart of the heart (3.*Pabhinnakhila*); victor in battle (4.*Vijita sangâma*); he knows no anguish (5.*Anîgha*); is perfectly even-minded (6.*Susamacitta*); mature in virtue (7.*Vuddhasîla*); of excellent wisdom (8.*Sâdhupañña*); beyond all temptations (9.*Vessantara*); he is without stain (10.*Vimala*): The Blessed One is he, and I am his disciple.

Free from perplexity (11.*Akathamkathî*); he abides contented (12.*Tusita*); spurning worldly gains (13.*Vantalokâmisâ*); a vessel of gladness (14.*Mudita*); a human being who has done the recluse's duty (15.*Katasamana*); incomparable human (16.*Manuja*); who bears his final body (17.*Antimasarira*); he is utterly peerless (18.*Anopama*); a human (19.*Nara*); and utterly spotless (20.*Viraja*): The Blessed One is he, and I am his disciple.

Virtue of the Buddha is Immeasurable and Unfathomable -*Virtues of the Buddha with One Hundred Epithets*

Many different people have talked about the virtues of Our Buddha for the last 2638 years. Are they all finished? Suppose a Buddha starts to describe the qualities, virtues of another Buddha from the very moment of his enlightenment and he continuously describes the virtues for an eon, one day, the eon may come to the end, but not the qualities, virtues of the Buddha. The qualities of the Buddha are unfathomable like the ocean, immeasurable like the waves in the ocean.

Once, a young follower of another faith, named *Upâli*, having understood the virtues of the Buddha composed ten different poems using one hundred epithets to designate the virtues of the Buddha and loudly recited them with delightful heart and full of confidence in the Buddha right in front of his own Master while the Master was shivering, shaking with full of jealousy and hatred. His Master asked him whose disciple are you? Then, the disciple *Upâli* composed these hymns of praise. Those hundred epithets are as follows:

“He is the Wise One (1.*Dira*); who has cast off delusion (2.*Vigatamoha*); abandoned the dart of the heart (3.*Pabhinnakhila*); victor in battle (4.*Vijita sangâma*); he knows no anguish (5.*Anîgha*); is perfectly even-minded (6.*Susamacitta*); mature in virtue (7.*Vuddhasîla*); of excellent wisdom (8.*Sâdhupañña*); beyond all temptations (9.*Vessantara*); he is without stain (10.*Vimala*): The Blessed One is he, and I am his disciple.

Free from perplexity (11.*Akathamkathî*); he abides contented (12.*Tusita*); spurning worldly gains (13.*Vantalokâmisâ*); a vessel of gladness (14.*Mudita*); a human being who has done the recluse's duty (15.*Katasamana*); incomparable human (16.*Manuja*); who bears his final body (17.*Antimasarira*); he is utterly peerless (18.*Anopama*); a human (19.*Nara*); and utterly spotless (20.*Viraja*): The Blessed One is he, and I am his disciple.

He is free from doubt (21.*Asamsaya*); and skillful (22.*Nipuna*); the discipliner (23.*Venayika*); and excellent leader (24.*Sâraṭhivara*); none can surpass (25.*Anuttara*); his resplendent qualities (26.*Ruciradhamma*); without hesitation (27.*Nikkankha*); he is the illuminator (28.*Pabhâsakara*); having severed conceit (29.*Manacchidda*); he is the hero (30.*Vîra*): The Blessed One is he, and I am his disciple.

The leader of the herd (31.*Nisabha*); he cannot be measured (32.*Appameyya*); his depths are unfathomed (33.*Gambhîra*); he attained to the silence (34.*Monapatta*); provider of safety (35.*Khemankara*); possessor of knowledge (36.*Devâ*); he stands in the Dhamma (37.*Dhammattha*); inwardly restrained (38.*Samvuta*); having overcome all bondage (39.*Sangâtiga*); he is liberated (40.*Mutta*): The Blessed One is he, and I am his disciple.

The immaculate tusker (41.*Nâga*); living in remoteness (42.*Paññâsena*); with fetters all shattered (43.*Khînasamyojana*); fully freed (44.*Mutta*); skilled in discussion (45.*Patimanta*); imbued with wisdom (46.*Dhona*); his banner lowered (47. *Pannaddhaja*); he no longer lusts (48.*Vitarâga*); having tamed himself (49.*Danta*); he no more proliferates (50.*Nippapañca*): The Blessed One is he, and I am his disciple.

The best of seven seers (51.*Isisattama*); with no deceptive schemes (52.*Akuha*); gained the triple knowledge (53.*Tevijja*); attained to holiness (54.*Brahmapatta*); his heart cleansed (55.*Nahâtaka*); a master of discourse (56.*Padaka*); he lives ever tranquil (57.*Passaddha*); the finder of knowledge (58.*Viditaveda*); the first of all givers (59.*Purindada*); he is ever-capable (60.*Sakka*): The Blessed One is he, and I am his disciple.

He is the Noble One (61.*Ariya*); developed in mind (62.*Bhâvitatta*); who has gained the goal (63.*Pattipatta*); and expounds the truth (64.*Veyyâkarana*); endowed with mindfulness (65.*Satimata*); and penetrative insight (66.*Vipassi*); he leans neither forward (67.*Anabhinata*) nor back (68.*Apanata*); free from perturbation (69.*Aneja*);

He is free from doubt (21.*Asamsaya*); and skillful (22.*Nipuna*); the discipliner (23.*Venayika*); and excellent leader (24.*Sâraṭhivara*); none can surpass (25.*Anuttara*); his resplendent qualities (26.*Ruciradhamma*); without hesitation (27.*Nikkankha*); he is the illuminator (28.*Pabhâsakara*); having severed conceit (29.*Manacchidda*); he is the hero (30.*Vîra*): The Blessed One is he, and I am his disciple.

The leader of the herd (31.*Nisabha*); he cannot be measured (32.*Appameyya*); his depths are unfathomed (33.*Gambhîra*); he attained to the silence (34.*Monapatta*); provider of safety (35.*Khemankara*); possessor of knowledge (36.*Devâ*); he stands in the Dhamma (37.*Dhammattha*); inwardly restrained (38.*Samvuta*); having overcome all bondage (39.*Sangâtiga*); he is liberated (40.*Mutta*): The Blessed One is he, and I am his disciple.

The immaculate tusker (41.*Nâga*); living in remoteness (42.*Paññâsena*); with fetters all shattered (43.*Khînasamyojana*); fully freed (44.*Mutta*); skilled in discussion (45.*Patimanta*); imbued with wisdom (46.*Dhona*); his banner lowered (47. *Pannaddhaja*); he no longer lusts (48.*Vitarâga*); having tamed himself (49.*Danta*); he no more proliferates (50.*Nippapañca*): The Blessed One is he, and I am his disciple.

The best of seven seers (51.*Isisattama*); with no deceptive schemes (52.*Akuha*); gained the triple knowledge (53.*Tevijja*); attained to holiness (54.*Brahmapatta*); his heart cleansed (55.*Nahâtaka*); a master of discourse (56.*Padaka*); he lives ever tranquil (57.*Passaddha*); the finder of knowledge (58.*Viditaveda*); the first of all givers (59.*Purindada*); he is ever-capable (60.*Sakka*): The Blessed One is he, and I am his disciple.

He is the Noble One (61.*Ariya*); developed in mind (62.*Bhâvitatta*); who has gained the goal (63.*Pattipatta*); and expounds the truth (64.*Veyyâkarana*); endowed with mindfulness (65.*Satimata*); and penetrative insight (66.*Vipassi*); he leans neither forward (67.*Anabhinata*) nor back (68.*Apanata*); free from perturbation (69.*Aneja*);

Attained to mastery (70.*Vasipatta*): The Blessed One is he, and I am his disciple.

He has fared rightly (71.*Sammagga*); and abides in meditation (72.*Jhâyi*); inwardly undefiled (73.*Ananugatantara*); in purity perfect (74.*Suddha*); he is independent (75.*Asita*); and altogether fearless (76.*Appahîna*); living secluded (77.*Pavivitta*); attained to the summit (78.*Aggappatta*); having crossed over himself (79.*Tinna*); he leads us across (80.*Târayanta*): The Blessed One is he, and I am his disciple.

Of supreme serenity (81.*Santa*); with extensive wisdom (82.*Bhuripañña*), a man of great wisdom (83.*Mahâpañña*); devoid of all greed (84.*Vitalobha*); he is the *Tathâgata* (85.*Tathâgata*), he is the Sublime One (86.*Sugata*); the person unrivaled (87.*Appatipuggala*), the one without equal (88.*Asama*); he is intrepid (89.*Visârada*), proficient in all (90.*Nipuna*): The Blessed One is he, and I am his disciple.

He has severed craving (91.*Tanhacchida*) and become the Enlightened One (92.*Buddha*); cleared of all clouds (93.*Vitadhumâ*); completely untainted (94.*Anupalitta*); most worthy of gifts (95.*Ahuneyya*); most mighty of spirits (96.*Yakkha*); most perfect of persons (97.*Uttamapuggala*); beyond estimation (98.*Atula*); the greatest in grandeur (99.*Mahato*) attained the peak of glory (100.*Yasaggappatta*): The Blessed One is he, and I am his disciple,” he said.

Finally, *Upali's* Master *Nigantha Nâthaputta* asked, “When did you concoct these hymns of praise to the recluse *Gotama*, householder? ” Then, *Upâli* said, “Venerable sir, suppose there were a great heap of many kinds of flowers, and then a clever garland-maker or garland-maker's apprentice were to knot them into a multi-colored garland; so too, venerable sir, the Blessed One has many praiseworthy qualities, many hundred praiseworthy qualities. Who, venerable sir, would not praise the praiseworthy?”

Then, since the *Niganta Nâthaputta* was unable to bear this honor done to the Blessed One, then and there hot blood gushed from his mouth and finally he passed away.

Attained to mastery (70.*Vasipatta*): The Blessed One is he, and I am his disciple.

He has fared rightly (71.*Sammagga*); and abides in meditation (72.*Jhâyi*); inwardly undefiled (73.*Ananugatantara*); in purity perfect (74.*Suddha*); he is independent (75.*Asita*); and altogether fearless (76.*Appahîna*); living secluded (77.*Pavivitta*); attained to the summit (78.*Aggappatta*); having crossed over himself (79.*Tinna*); he leads us across (80.*Târayanta*): The Blessed One is he, and I am his disciple.

Of supreme serenity (81.*Santa*); with extensive wisdom (82.*Bhuripañña*), a man of great wisdom (83.*Mahâpañña*); devoid of all greed (84.*Vitalobha*); he is the *Tathâgata* (85.*Tathâgata*), he is the Sublime One (86.*Sugata*); the person unrivaled (87.*Appatipuggala*), the one without equal (88.*Asama*); he is intrepid (89.*Visârada*), proficient in all (90.*Nipuna*): The Blessed One is he, and I am his disciple.

He has severed craving (91.*Tanhacchida*) and become the Enlightened One (92.*Buddha*); cleared of all clouds (93.*Vitadhumâ*); completely untainted (94.*Anupalitta*); most worthy of gifts (95.*Ahuneyya*); most mighty of spirits (96.*Yakkha*); most perfect of persons (97.*Uttamapuggala*); beyond estimation (98.*Atula*); the greatest in grandeur (99.*Mahato*) attained the peak of glory (100.*Yasaggappatta*): The Blessed One is he, and I am his disciple,” he said.

Finally, *Upali's* Master *Nigantha Nâthaputta* asked, “When did you concoct these hymns of praise to the recluse *Gotama*, householder? ” Then, *Upâli* said, “Venerable sir, suppose there were a great heap of many kinds of flowers, and then a clever garland-maker or garland-maker's apprentice were to knot them into a multi-colored garland; so too, venerable sir, the Blessed One has many praiseworthy qualities, many hundred praiseworthy qualities. Who, venerable sir, would not praise the praiseworthy?”

Then, since the *Niganta Nâthaputta* was unable to bear this honor done to the Blessed One, then and there hot blood gushed from his mouth and finally he passed away.

The Brahmin Sela Sees Our Buddha

In accordance with the *To Sela Sutta* of the *Sutta Nipâta* and in *The Middle Length Sayings of the Buddha*,⁴⁰ simply by hearing the word 'Buddha' from his friend the mattered-hair ascetic *Keniya*, the *Brahmin Sela* started to inquire with excited mind as, "Buddha, did you say, 'Buddha'?" He then said, "This word 'Buddha' itself is a rare word in the world. Where is that Buddha now?" When, for the first time, *Anathapindika* or *Sudatta* heard of the word of "Buddha" from the millionaire of *Râjagaha*, he himself being delighted, wanted to see Our Buddha in the same manner. *Buddhas* are very rare in the world. The Buddha himself said, "*kiṇṇo Buddhānam uppādo*." How fortunate is even the mere seeing of a Buddha? However, the real seeing of the Buddha is not seeing the body of the Buddha but seeing the Dhamma. The Buddha said, "He who sees the Dhamma sees me."

Vakkali was one of the disciples of the Buddha. He was always eagerly looking at the Buddha. Then, the Buddha said, "*Vakkali*, what is the use of looking at this filthy body?"

Sela went to see the Buddha and having seen the thirty-two marks of a great man, he extolled the Buddha in his presence with fitting stanzas.

Sela said:

O perfect in body, well favored,
Well fashioned and lovely to behold;
Blessed One golden is your color,
And white your teeth; you are strong.
The features are seen one and all
That distinguish a man as well born;
They are all to be found on your body,
These marks that reveal a Great Man.
With eyes clear, with countenance bright,
Majestic, erect as a flame,
In the midst of this body of recluses
You shine like the blazing sun.
A *bhikkhu* so lovely to look on

The Brahmin Sela Sees Our Buddha

In accordance with the *To Sela Sutta* of the *Sutta Nipâta* and in *The Middle Length Sayings of the Buddha*,⁴⁰ simply by hearing the word 'Buddha' from his friend the mattered-hair ascetic *Keniya*, the *Brahmin Sela* started to inquire with excited mind as, "Buddha, did you say, 'Buddha'?" He then said, "This word 'Buddha' itself is a rare word in the world. Where is that Buddha now?" When, for the first time, *Anathapindika* or *Sudatta* heard of the word of "Buddha" from the millionaire of *Râjagaha*, he himself being delighted, wanted to see Our Buddha in the same manner. *Buddhas* are very rare in the world. The Buddha himself said, "*kiṇṇo Buddhānam uppādo*." How fortunate is even the mere seeing of a Buddha? However, the real seeing of the Buddha is not seeing the body of the Buddha but seeing the Dhamma. The Buddha said, "He who sees the Dhamma sees me."

Vakkali was one of the disciples of the Buddha. He was always eagerly looking at the Buddha. Then, the Buddha said, "*Vakkali*, what is the use of looking at this filthy body?"

Sela went to see the Buddha and having seen the thirty-two marks of a great man, he extolled the Buddha in his presence with fitting stanzas.

Sela said:

O perfect in body, well favored,
Well fashioned and lovely to behold;
Blessed One golden is your color,
And white your teeth; you are strong.
The features are seen one and all
That distinguish a man as well born;
They are all to be found on your body,
These marks that reveal a Great Man.
With eyes clear, with countenance bright,
Majestic, erect as a flame,
In the midst of this body of recluses
You shine like the blazing sun.
A *bhikkhu* so lovely to look on

With skin of so golden a sheen-
With beauty so rare why should you
Be content with the life of a recluse?
You are fit to be a king, a lord of chariots,
A monarch who makes the wheel turn,
A victor in all the four quarters
And lord of the *Jambu*-tree Grove.
With warriors and great princes
All devoted to your service,
Gotama, you should reign
As ruler of men, king above all kings.

When this was said, the Buddha said, “*Sela* I am already a king. I am supreme king of the Dhamma. I make the wheel of Dhamma revolve, the wheel that none can stop.” Thus, Our Buddha is the Supreme King of the Dhamma (*Dhammaraja Anuttaro*).

The Wanderer Sabhiya Sees Our Buddha

As given in the *Sabhiya Suttain* the same *Collection of the Discourses of the Buddha (Sutta Nipâta)*⁴¹ the wanderer *Sabhiya* went to see the Buddha while the Buddha was dwelling at the Bamboo Grove in *Râjagaha*. Having approached the Buddha and being thrilled, he said, “Master, You have crossed over the flood and reached its end! You've gone to the very furthest point of suffering and you've gone beyond it. You, Master, are a man of worth; self-awakened. For you, I think, there are no more inner drives. You are glowing with understanding, radiating and full of great wisdom. O great valiant, wholly free from all worries, take me too across. All disturbances cut out. Evil-free, Noble One free. You are the hero amongst heroes and a power amongst the strong! Nowhere in this world is there anyone like you you are the best and the noblest being! I salute you and I honor you! It's like a lotus flower on a lake! Good and evil roll off you, ineffective, like water drops off a lotus petal. Let me honor the feet of a conqueror; I am *Sabhiya* the worshipper at the feet of his teacher!”

With skin of so golden a sheen-
With beauty so rare why should you
Be content with the life of a recluse?
You are fit to be a king, a lord of chariots,
A monarch who makes the wheel turn,
A victor in all the four quarters
And lord of the *Jambu*-tree Grove.
With warriors and great princes
All devoted to your service,
Gotama, you should reign
As ruler of men, king above all kings.

When this was said, the Buddha said, “*Sela* I am already a king. I am supreme king of the Dhamma. I make the wheel of Dhamma revolve, the wheel that none can stop.” Thus, Our Buddha is the Supreme King of the Dhamma (*Dhammaraja Anuttaro*).

The Wanderer Sabhiya Sees Our Buddha

As given in the *Sabhiya Suttain* the same *Collection of the Discourses of the Buddha (Sutta Nipâta)*⁴¹ the wanderer *Sabhiya* went to see the Buddha while the Buddha was dwelling at the Bamboo Grove in *Râjagaha*. Having approached the Buddha and being thrilled, he said, “Master, You have crossed over the flood and reached its end! You've gone to the very furthest point of suffering and you've gone beyond it. You, Master, are a man of worth; self-awakened. For you, I think, there are no more inner drives. You are glowing with understanding, radiating and full of great wisdom. O great valiant, wholly free from all worries, take me too across. All disturbances cut out. Evil-free, Noble One free. You are the hero amongst heroes and a power amongst the strong! Nowhere in this world is there anyone like you you are the best and the noblest being! I salute you and I honor you! It's like a lotus flower on a lake! Good and evil roll off you, ineffective, like water drops off a lotus petal. Let me honor the feet of a conqueror; I am *Sabhiya* the worshipper at the feet of his teacher!”

Uttara and Brahmāyu See Our Buddha

According to the *Brahmayu Sutta* of *The Middle Length Sayings of the Buddha*,⁴² having heard of the Buddha a certain well known and erudite *brahmin* named *Brahmāyu* who was well versed in the Three Vedas sent his obedient, young disciple, *Uttara*, to search for the marks of a great man and decide whether the Buddha was really the Buddha or not. When he saw all the thirty-two great marks of the Buddha, he was shocked and became silent. Not yet satisfied, he decided to observe the characteristics of the Buddha further and further. He followed the Buddha (like a paparazzi) to find the faults of the Buddha. In this manner, for seven months, he followed the Buddha like a shadow. Finally, he understood clearly who Our Buddha was and returned to his teacher *Brahmāyu* and submitted his report as follows.

“The report that has been spread through all over about the Blessed *Gotama* is true sir. He possesses all thirty-two marks of a great man. When he walks, he steps out with the right foot first. He does not extend his foot too far or put it down too near. He walks neither too quickly nor too slowly. He walks without his knees knocking together. He walks without his ankles knocking together. He walks without raising or lowering his thighs, or bringing them together or keeping them apart. When he walks, only the lower part of his body oscillates, and he does not walk with bodily effort. When he turns to look, he does so with his whole body. He does not look straight up; he does not look straight down. He does not walk looking about. He looks a plough-yoke's length [six feet] before him; beyond that he has unhindered knowledge and vision.

“When he goes indoors, he does not raise or lower his body, or bend it forward or back. [When sitting] he turns round neither too far from the seat nor too near it. He does not lean on the seat with his hand. He does not throw his body onto the seat.

“When seated indoors, he does not fidget with his hands. He does not fidget with his feet. He does not sit with his knees crossed. He does not sit with his ankles crossed. He does not

Uttara and Brahmāyu See Our Buddha

According to the *Brahmayu Sutta* of *The Middle Length Sayings of the Buddha*,⁴² having heard of the Buddha a certain well known and erudite *brahmin* named *Brahmāyu* who was well versed in the Three Vedas sent his obedient, young disciple, *Uttara*, to search for the marks of a great man and decide whether the Buddha was really the Buddha or not. When he saw all the thirty-two great marks of the Buddha, he was shocked and became silent. Not yet satisfied, he decided to observe the characteristics of the Buddha further and further. He followed the Buddha (like a paparazzi) to find the faults of the Buddha. In this manner, for seven months, he followed the Buddha like a shadow. Finally, he understood clearly who Our Buddha was and returned to his teacher *Brahmāyu* and submitted his report as follows.

“The report that has been spread through all over about the Blessed *Gotama* is true sir. He possesses all thirty-two marks of a great man. When he walks, he steps out with the right foot first. He does not extend his foot too far or put it down too near. He walks neither too quickly nor too slowly. He walks without his knees knocking together. He walks without his ankles knocking together. He walks without raising or lowering his thighs, or bringing them together or keeping them apart. When he walks, only the lower part of his body oscillates, and he does not walk with bodily effort. When he turns to look, he does so with his whole body. He does not look straight up; he does not look straight down. He does not walk looking about. He looks a plough-yoke's length [six feet] before him; beyond that he has unhindered knowledge and vision.

“When he goes indoors, he does not raise or lower his body, or bend it forward or back. [When sitting] he turns round neither too far from the seat nor too near it. He does not lean on the seat with his hand. He does not throw his body onto the seat.

“When seated indoors, he does not fidget with his hands. He does not fidget with his feet. He does not sit with his knees crossed. He does not sit with his ankles crossed. He does not

sit with his hand holding his chin. When seated indoors he is not afraid, he does not shiver and tremble, he is not nervous. Being unafraid, not shivering or trembling or nervous, his hair does not stand up and he is intent on seclusion.

“When he receives the water for the bowl, he does not raise or lower the bowl or tip it forwards or backwards. He receives neither too little nor too much water for the bowl. He washes the bowl without making a splashing noise. He washes the bowl without turning it round. He does not put the bowl on the floor to wash his hands: when his hands are washed, the bowl is washed; and when the bowl is washed, his hands are washed. He pours the water for the bowl neither too far nor too near and he does not pour it about.

“When he receives rice, he does not raise or lower the bowl or tip it forwards or backwards. He receives neither too little rice nor too much rice. He adds sauces in the right proportion; he does not exceed the right amount of sauce in the mouthful. He turns the mouthful over two or three times and puts it in the mouth and then chews it well and swallows it, and no rice kernel enters his body unchewed, and no rice kernel remains in his mouth; then he takes another mouthful. He takes his food experiencing the taste, though not experiencing greed for the taste. The food he takes has eight factors: (1) It is neither for amusement, (2) nor for intoxication, (3) nor for the sake of physical beauty and attractiveness, but (4) only for the endurance and continuance of his body, (5) for the ending of discomfort, and (6) for assisting the holy life; he considers: (7) Thus I shall terminate old feelings without arousing new feelings, and (8) I shall be healthy and blameless and shall live in comfort.

“When he has eaten, he puts the bowl on the floor neither too far nor too near; and he is neither careless of the bowl nor over-solicitous about it.

“When he has eaten, he sits in silence for a while, but he does not let the time for the blessing go by. When he has eaten and gives the blessing, he does not do so criticizing the meal or expecting another meal; he instructs, urges, rouses, and

sit with his hand holding his chin. When seated indoors he is not afraid, he does not shiver and tremble, he is not nervous. Being unafraid, not shivering or trembling or nervous, his hair does not stand up and he is intent on seclusion.

“When he receives the water for the bowl, he does not raise or lower the bowl or tip it forwards or backwards. He receives neither too little nor too much water for the bowl. He washes the bowl without making a splashing noise. He washes the bowl without turning it round. He does not put the bowl on the floor to wash his hands: when his hands are washed, the bowl is washed; and when the bowl is washed, his hands are washed. He pours the water for the bowl neither too far nor too near and he does not pour it about.

“When he receives rice, he does not raise or lower the bowl or tip it forwards or backwards. He receives neither too little rice nor too much rice. He adds sauces in the right proportion; he does not exceed the right amount of sauce in the mouthful. He turns the mouthful over two or three times and puts it in the mouth and then chews it well and swallows it, and no rice kernel enters his body unchewed, and no rice kernel remains in his mouth; then he takes another mouthful. He takes his food experiencing the taste, though not experiencing greed for the taste. The food he takes has eight factors: (1) It is neither for amusement, (2) nor for intoxication, (3) nor for the sake of physical beauty and attractiveness, but (4) only for the endurance and continuance of his body, (5) for the ending of discomfort, and (6) for assisting the holy life; he considers: (7) Thus I shall terminate old feelings without arousing new feelings, and (8) I shall be healthy and blameless and shall live in comfort.

“When he has eaten, he puts the bowl on the floor neither too far nor too near; and he is neither careless of the bowl nor over-solicitous about it.

“When he has eaten, he sits in silence for a while, but he does not let the time for the blessing go by. When he has eaten and gives the blessing, he does not do so criticizing the meal or expecting another meal; he instructs, urges, rouses, and

encourages that audience with talk purely on the Dhamma. When he has done so, he rises from his seat and departs.

“He walks neither too fast nor too slow, and he does not go as one who wants to get away.

“His robe is worn neither too high nor too low on his body, nor too tight against his body, nor too loose on his body, nor does the wind blow his robe away from his body. Dust and dirt do not soil his body.

“When he has gone to the monastery, he sits down on a seat made ready. Having sat down, he washes his feet, though he does not concern himself with grooming his feet. Having washed his feet, he seats himself cross-legged, sets his body erect, and establishes mindfulness in front of him. He does not occupy his mind with self-affliction, or the affliction of others, or the affliction of both; he sits with his mind set on his own welfare, on the welfare of others, and on the welfare of both, even on the welfare of the whole world.

“When he has gone to the monastery, he teaches the Dhamma to an audience. He neither flatters nor berates that audience; he instructs, urges, rouses, and encourages it with talk purely on the Dhamma. The speech that issues from his mouth has eight qualities: (1) it is distinct, (2) intelligible, (3) melodious, (4) audible, (5) ringing, (6) euphonious, (7) deep, and (8) sonorous. But while his voice is intelligible as far as the audience extends, his speech does not issue out beyond the audience. When the people have been instructed, urged, roused, and encouraged by him, they rise from their seats and depart looking only at him and concerned with nothing else.

“We have seen Master *Gotama* walking, sir, we have seen him standing, we have seen him entering indoors, we have seen him indoors seated in silence after eating, we have seen him giving the blessing after eating, we have seen him going to the monastery in silence, we have seen him in the monastery teaching the Dhamma to an audience. Such is the Master *Gotama*; such he is, and more than that.”

encourages that audience with talk purely on the Dhamma. When he has done so, he rises from his seat and departs.

“He walks neither too fast nor too slow, and he does not go as one who wants to get away.

“His robe is worn neither too high nor too low on his body, nor too tight against his body, nor too loose on his body, nor does the wind blow his robe away from his body. Dust and dirt do not soil his body.

“When he has gone to the monastery, he sits down on a seat made ready. Having sat down, he washes his feet, though he does not concern himself with grooming his feet. Having washed his feet, he seats himself cross-legged, sets his body erect, and establishes mindfulness in front of him. He does not occupy his mind with self-affliction, or the affliction of others, or the affliction of both; he sits with his mind set on his own welfare, on the welfare of others, and on the welfare of both, even on the welfare of the whole world.

“When he has gone to the monastery, he teaches the Dhamma to an audience. He neither flatters nor berates that audience; he instructs, urges, rouses, and encourages it with talk purely on the Dhamma. The speech that issues from his mouth has eight qualities: (1) it is distinct, (2) intelligible, (3) melodious, (4) audible, (5) ringing, (6) euphonious, (7) deep, and (8) sonorous. But while his voice is intelligible as far as the audience extends, his speech does not issue out beyond the audience. When the people have been instructed, urged, roused, and encouraged by him, they rise from their seats and depart looking only at him and concerned with nothing else.

“We have seen Master *Gotama* walking, sir, we have seen him standing, we have seen him entering indoors, we have seen him indoors seated in silence after eating, we have seen him giving the blessing after eating, we have seen him going to the monastery in silence, we have seen him in the monastery teaching the Dhamma to an audience. Such is the Master *Gotama*; such he is, and more than that.”

Then, when this was said to his teacher *Brahmāyu* he arose from his seat arranged his upper cloth and extending his hands towards the direction on which the Buddha was dwelling at that time reverentially recited three times. “Homage to the Blessed One, the Worthy One, the fully Self-Awakened One!” [*Namo tassa bhagavato arahato sammā sambuddhassa.*] Further he said, “We should one day visit that *Gotama* the Blessed One. It's wonderful if it would be possible for us to have a conversation with him.”

(Friends, this person, *Uttara*, was neither a person who had gone Buddha for his refuge nor a disciple of the Buddha. He was one of many, minor *brahmins* who were detrimental and derogatory towards Our Buddha, but see, how he understood truth when he observed it.)

Once, while wandering from place to place sharing the Dhamma and the technique of meditation with both men and gods, Our Buddha visited a city called *Mithila* in the country of *Videhans* and dwelled in the *Makhādeva* mango grove. *Brahmāyu* then heard that the Buddha was dwelling in that particular mango grove of the same city. Then, he visited the Buddha and observed the thirty-two marks of a great man in the Buddha's body. Having realized that Our Buddha had the thirty-two marks of a great man and being delighted with it, he asked questions of the Buddha and became elated.

When he first visited the Buddha, they had a short conversation and after that, dispelling all his doubts, the Buddha introduced him as follows.

“I comprehended what is to be comprehended, developed what is to be developed, abandoned what is to be abandoned. Therefore, *brahmin*, I am the Buddha.” [*Abhiññeyyam abhiññātam, bhāvetabbam ca bhāvitam, pahātabbam pahīnam me tasmā buddhosmi brāhmaṇa.*]

When this was heard *Brahmāyu*, found no boundaries of his joy and gladness. Being elated he stood up from the seat and keeping his forehead on the lotus-like feet of the Buddha and kissing and gently rubbing them with his hands, he

Then, when this was said to his teacher *Brahmāyu* he arose from his seat arranged his upper cloth and extending his hands towards the direction on which the Buddha was dwelling at that time reverentially recited three times. “Homage to the Blessed One, the Worthy One, the fully Self-Awakened One!” [*Namo tassa bhagavato arahato sammā sambuddhassa.*] Further he said, “We should one day visit that *Gotama* the Blessed One. It's wonderful if it would be possible for us to have a conversation with him.”

(Friends, this person, *Uttara*, was neither a person who had gone Buddha for his refuge nor a disciple of the Buddha. He was one of many, minor *brahmins* who were detrimental and derogatory towards Our Buddha, but see, how he understood truth when he observed it.)

Once, while wandering from place to place sharing the Dhamma and the technique of meditation with both men and gods, Our Buddha visited a city called *Mithila* in the country of *Videhans* and dwelled in the *Makhādeva* mango grove. *Brahmāyu* then heard that the Buddha was dwelling in that particular mango grove of the same city. Then, he visited the Buddha and observed the thirty-two marks of a great man in the Buddha's body. Having realized that Our Buddha had the thirty-two marks of a great man and being delighted with it, he asked questions of the Buddha and became elated.

When he first visited the Buddha, they had a short conversation and after that, dispelling all his doubts, the Buddha introduced him as follows.

“I comprehended what is to be comprehended, developed what is to be developed, abandoned what is to be abandoned. Therefore, *brahmin*, I am the Buddha.” [*Abhiññeyyam abhiññātam, bhāvetabbam ca bhāvitam, pahātabbam pahīnam me tasmā buddhosmi brāhmaṇa.*]

When this was heard *Brahmāyu*, found no boundaries of his joy and gladness. Being elated he stood up from the seat and keeping his forehead on the lotus-like feet of the Buddha and kissing and gently rubbing them with his hands, he

pronounced, “O *Gotama*, the Blessed One, I’m *Brahmāyu*, I’m *Brahmāyu* .” All those there were entirely surprised and amazed with this unprecedented event. It was really wonderful and marvelous that such a famous elder, a formerly conceited *brahmin*, became such a humble and simple person to salute Our Buddha, the Blessed One. They all appreciated and highly venerated the greatness and compassion of the Buddha.

The Buddha then advised the *brahmin Brahmāyu* to get up and take his own seat. The *brahmin* took his seat. Thereafter, the Buddha gave him the special talk called the progressive talk (*ānupubbīkatha*) starting with the significance of practicing generosity, morality, and then the nature of heavens, danger of sensual pleasures, degradation and defilement, and the blessing of renunciation respectively. Finally, Our Buddha taught him the Four Noble Truths, which is the central and unique teaching of the Buddha. When the teaching was over, on the same seat the *brahmin Brahmāyu* experienced the immaculate vision of Dhamma (*Dhammacakkhu*), which is the mind that is completely free from the dust of defilement. This is the first stage of the holy life, the state of stream-entry. He then became a lay follower (*upāsaka*) of the Buddha and went to the Buddha, Dhamma, and Sangha as his matchless refuge. Afterwards, he invited the Buddha together with his disciples to have the noon meal at his home on the following day.

The Buddha accepted his invitation and on the following day he went there together with a retinue of monks and had the noon meal. After this meal, he offered meals to the Sangha led by the Buddha for seven days consecutively. Then, several days later, the Buddha visited another place during which time *Brahmāyu* the *brahmin* passed away. When the monks informed the Buddha, he said, “Monks, *Brahmāyu* the *brahmin* destroyed the first five fetters and was reborn in the pure abode as a non-returner.”

pronounced, “O *Gotama*, the Blessed One, I’m *Brahmāyu*, I’m *Brahmāyu* .” All those there were entirely surprised and amazed with this unprecedented event. It was really wonderful and marvelous that such a famous elder, a formerly conceited *brahmin*, became such a humble and simple person to salute Our Buddha, the Blessed One. They all appreciated and highly venerated the greatness and compassion of the Buddha.

The Buddha then advised the *brahmin Brahmāyu* to get up and take his own seat. The *brahmin* took his seat. Thereafter, the Buddha gave him the special talk called the progressive talk (*ānupubbīkatha*) starting with the significance of practicing generosity, morality, and then the nature of heavens, danger of sensual pleasures, degradation and defilement, and the blessing of renunciation respectively. Finally, Our Buddha taught him the Four Noble Truths, which is the central and unique teaching of the Buddha. When the teaching was over, on the same seat the *brahmin Brahmāyu* experienced the immaculate vision of Dhamma (*Dhammacakkhu*), which is the mind that is completely free from the dust of defilement. This is the first stage of the holy life, the state of stream-entry. He then became a lay follower (*upāsaka*) of the Buddha and went to the Buddha, Dhamma, and Sangha as his matchless refuge. Afterwards, he invited the Buddha together with his disciples to have the noon meal at his home on the following day.

The Buddha accepted his invitation and on the following day he went there together with a retinue of monks and had the noon meal. After this meal, he offered meals to the Sangha led by the Buddha for seven days consecutively. Then, several days later, the Buddha visited another place during which time *Brahmāyu* the *brahmin* passed away. When the monks informed the Buddha, he said, “Monks, *Brahmāyu* the *brahmin* destroyed the first five fetters and was reborn in the pure abode as a non-returner.”

Sakuludâyin Sees Our Buddha

Sakuludâyin was one of the most famous wanderers who frequented large gatherings of disciples in the time of Our Buddha in *Rājagaha*. One day, while Our Buddha was on his daily alms ground, as it was a bit early to visit homes, he decided to visit *Sakuludâyin's* monastery. Now on that occasion, the wanderer *Sakuludâyin* was seated with a large assembly of wanderers who were making an uproar, loudly and noisily talking about many kinds of pointless topics, such as talk of kings, robbers, ministers, armies, dangers, battles, food, drink, clothing, beds, garlands, perfumes, relatives, vehicles, villages, towns, cities, countries, women, heroes, streets, wells, the dead, trifles, the origin of the world, the origin of the sea, whether things are so or are not so.

Then, the wanderer *Sakuludâyin* saw the venerable *Gotama*, the Blessed One, coming in the distance. Seeing him, he quieted his own assembly thus: “Sirs, be quiet; sirs, make no noise. Here comes the recluse *Gotama*, this venerable one likes quiet and commends quiet. Perhaps if he finds our assembly a quiet one, he will think to join us.” Then, the wanderers became silent.

Then, *Sakuludâyin* said, “Let the Blessed One come, venerable sir! Welcome to the Blessed One! It is long since the Blessed One found an opportunity to visit us. Let the Blessed One be seated; this seat is ready.”

Having taken the seat, the Buddha asked him what was the subject that was interrupted with his arrival. *Sakuludâyin* then said, “That is not that important. Even that can be heard of later.” Further he says, “In recent days, venerable sir, when recluses and *brahmins* of various sects have been gathering together and sitting together in the debating hall, this topic has arisen. 'It is a gain for the people of *Anga* and *Magadha*; it is a great gain for the people of *Anga* and *Magadha*. That these recluses and *brahmins*, heads of orders, heads of groups, teachers of groups, well-known and famous founders of sects regarded by many as saints, have come to spend the Rains at *Rājagaha*. There is this *Purana Kassapa*,

Sakuludâyin Sees Our Buddha

Sakuludâyin was one of the most famous wanderers who frequented large gatherings of disciples in the time of Our Buddha in *Rājagaha*. One day, while Our Buddha was on his daily alms ground, as it was a bit early to visit homes, he decided to visit *Sakuludâyin's* monastery. Now on that occasion, the wanderer *Sakuludâyin* was seated with a large assembly of wanderers who were making an uproar, loudly and noisily talking about many kinds of pointless topics, such as talk of kings, robbers, ministers, armies, dangers, battles, food, drink, clothing, beds, garlands, perfumes, relatives, vehicles, villages, towns, cities, countries, women, heroes, streets, wells, the dead, trifles, the origin of the world, the origin of the sea, whether things are so or are not so.

Then, the wanderer *Sakuludâyin* saw the venerable *Gotama*, the Blessed One, coming in the distance. Seeing him, he quieted his own assembly thus: “Sirs, be quiet; sirs, make no noise. Here comes the recluse *Gotama*, this venerable one likes quiet and commends quiet. Perhaps if he finds our assembly a quiet one, he will think to join us.” Then, the wanderers became silent.

Then, *Sakuludâyin* said, “Let the Blessed One come, venerable sir! Welcome to the Blessed One! It is long since the Blessed One found an opportunity to visit us. Let the Blessed One be seated; this seat is ready.”

Having taken the seat, the Buddha asked him what was the subject that was interrupted with his arrival. *Sakuludâyin* then said, “That is not that important. Even that can be heard of later.” Further he says, “In recent days, venerable sir, when recluses and *brahmins* of various sects have been gathering together and sitting together in the debating hall, this topic has arisen. 'It is a gain for the people of *Anga* and *Magadha*; it is a great gain for the people of *Anga* and *Magadha*. That these recluses and *brahmins*, heads of orders, heads of groups, teachers of groups, well-known and famous founders of sects regarded by many as saints, have come to spend the Rains at *Rājagaha*. There is this *Purana Kassapa*,

Makkhali Gosâla, Pakudha Kaccâyana, Ajitha Kesakambala, Sanjaya Belatthiputta, Niganthanâtha Putta and the *Gotama*, the Blessed One, and how honoring and respecting them by their disciples. Of them all, they all agreed and appreciated the way how the disciples of *Gotama*, the Blessed One, honor and venerate the Blessed One.”

Then, Our Buddha asked him, “*Sakuludâyin*, do you know the reason why they honor and venerate me in such a way?” *Sakuludâyin* says, “It is because of five reasons.” As he says, those five reasons are as follows.

“The Buddha eats only a little. The Buddha is content with any kind of robe and commends contentment with any kind of robe. The Buddha is content with any kind of alms food and commends contentment with any kind of alms food. The Buddha is content with any kind of resting place and commends contentment with any kind of resting place. The Buddha is secluded and commends seclusion.”

Our Buddha categorically and convincingly pointed out to the *brahmin* that it was not because of any of these reasons that his disciples honor, respect, and revere him. Here, the Buddha pointed out five reasons or qualities for which his disciples honor, respect, revere, and venerate him as the teacher and live dependent on him. They are:

1. Because of his higher virtue (*adhi sila*)
2. Because of his knowledge and vision (*ñâna dassana*)
3. Because of his higher wisdom (*adhi paññâ*)
4. Because he teaches the Four Noble Truths and illustrates them well (*cattâri ariya saccâni*)
5. Because he teaches how to develop and cultivate wholesome states (*kusala*)

Our Buddha taught these wholesome states and how they are to be developed and cultivated.

He stated:

1. How to develop and cultivate the Four Establishments of Mindfulness

Makkhali Gosâla, Pakudha Kaccâyana, Ajitha Kesakambala, Sanjaya Belatthiputta, Niganthanâtha Putta and the *Gotama*, the Blessed One, and how honoring and respecting them by their disciples. Of them all, they all agreed and appreciated the way how the disciples of *Gotama*, the Blessed One, honor and venerate the Blessed One.”

Then, Our Buddha asked him, “*Sakuludâyin*, do you know the reason why they honor and venerate me in such a way?” *Sakuludâyin* says, “It is because of five reasons.” As he says, those five reasons are as follows.

“The Buddha eats only a little. The Buddha is content with any kind of robe and commends contentment with any kind of robe. The Buddha is content with any kind of alms food and commends contentment with any kind of alms food. The Buddha is content with any kind of resting place and commends contentment with any kind of resting place. The Buddha is secluded and commends seclusion.”

Our Buddha categorically and convincingly pointed out to the *brahmin* that it was not because of any of these reasons that his disciples honor, respect, and revere him. Here, the Buddha pointed out five reasons or qualities for which his disciples honor, respect, revere, and venerate him as the teacher and live dependent on him. They are:

1. Because of his higher virtue (*adhi sila*)
2. Because of his knowledge and vision (*ñâna dassana*)
3. Because of his higher wisdom (*adhi paññâ*)
4. Because he teaches the Four Noble Truths and illustrates them well (*cattâri ariya saccâni*)
5. Because he teaches how to develop and cultivate wholesome states (*kusala*)

Our Buddha taught these wholesome states and how they are to be developed and cultivated.

He stated:

1. How to develop and cultivate the Four Establishments of Mindfulness

2. How to develop and cultivate the Four Right Kinds of Striving
3. How to develop and cultivate the Four Bases for Spiritual Powers
4. How to develop and cultivate the Five Spiritual Faculties
5. How to develop and cultivate the Five Spiritual Powers
6. How to develop and cultivate the Seven Factors of Enlightenment
7. How to develop and cultivate the Noble Eightfold Path
8. How to develop and cultivate the Eight Liberations
9. How to develop and cultivate Eight Bases for Transcendence
10. How to develop and cultivate the ten *kasinas* (devices for meditation)
11. How to develop and cultivate the four *jhânas*
12. How to develop and cultivate insight knowledge
13. How to develop and cultivate mind to separate mind and body, as a mind-made body
14. How to develop and cultivate the kinds of supernormal powers
15. How to develop and cultivate the divine ear element
16. How to develop and cultivate mind for the understanding of minds of others
17. How to develop and cultivate the mind for the recollection of past lives
18. How to develop and cultivate the mind to understand the divine eye to see how beings are born to this world and how they depart here and are born somewhere else, in other realms
19. How to develop and cultivate mind for the destruction of all taints and attain full perfection as a perfect human

When the Buddha taught all these to *Sakuludâyin*, he was glad, satisfied and delighted in the teachings of the Buddha.⁴³

2. How to develop and cultivate the Four Right Kinds of Striving
3. How to develop and cultivate the Four Bases for Spiritual Powers
4. How to develop and cultivate the Five Spiritual Faculties
5. How to develop and cultivate the Five Spiritual Powers
6. How to develop and cultivate the Seven Factors of Enlightenment
7. How to develop and cultivate the Noble Eightfold Path
8. How to develop and cultivate the Eight Liberations
9. How to develop and cultivate Eight Bases for Transcendence
10. How to develop and cultivate the ten *kasinas* (devices for meditation)
11. How to develop and cultivate the four *jhânas*
12. How to develop and cultivate insight knowledge
13. How to develop and cultivate mind to separate mind and body, as a mind-made body
14. How to develop and cultivate the kinds of supernormal powers
15. How to develop and cultivate the divine ear element
16. How to develop and cultivate mind for the understanding of minds of others
17. How to develop and cultivate the mind for the recollection of past lives
18. How to develop and cultivate the mind to understand the divine eye to see how beings are born to this world and how they depart here and are born somewhere else, in other realms
19. How to develop and cultivate mind for the destruction of all taints and attain full perfection as a perfect human

When the Buddha taught all these to *Sakuludâyin*, he was glad, satisfied and delighted in the teachings of the Buddha.⁴³

Only Our Buddha, the Thus Gone One, who was born in this auspicious era, has taught us all these. That Buddha Our Lord should be honored, respected, revered, and venerated constantly by all. We go to the refuge of that Buddha. Let us all keep the qualities of the Buddha in our heart forever and live peacefully with contentment and solace in heart and mind.

It is impossible for anyone whether writing, drawing, composing poems, or giving lengthy lectures about the virtues of the Buddha to exhaust the qualities of the Buddha. The virtue of the Buddha is a vast ocean. Having no limit, it is therefore unfathomable, illimitable, and certainly immeasurable. Deep and profound, it is simply endless and infinite.

Suppose, a Buddha starts to describe the qualities of another Buddha from the day that he attained enlightenment. That Buddha talks only on the qualities of the Buddha. He lives only one eon. During his full life, he teaches only the qualities of the Buddha. Then, finally, the eon comes to the end, but not the qualities of the Buddha.

Though there is no one in the world to adequately explain the qualities of the Buddha, there is a stanza composed by the Buddha himself to describe these qualities. This is a stanza that we Buddhists recite respectfully daily in the morning and evening. Here, the Buddha condensed the many virtues of the Buddha into nine great virtues. The stanza is, *“Such indeed is the Sublime One, worthy, perfectly enlightened, perfect in true knowledge and conduct, well-gone, knower of the world, supreme trainer of persons to be tamed, teacher of gods and humans, enlightened and exalted.”* (Itipiso bhagavâ araham, sammâ sambuddho, vijiâ carana sampanno, sugato, loka vidu, anuttaro purisa damma sârathi, satthâ devamanussanam, buddho, bhagavâ'ti)

Let us all recollect and reflect upon these qualities of the Buddha. We should strive to properly understand each and every one of them. Then, we all can understand, develop, and cultivate a wonderful and marvelous quality that is a factor

Only Our Buddha, the Thus Gone One, who was born in this auspicious era, has taught us all these. That Buddha Our Lord should be honored, respected, revered, and venerated constantly by all. We go to the refuge of that Buddha. Let us all keep the qualities of the Buddha in our heart forever and live peacefully with contentment and solace in heart and mind.

It is impossible for anyone whether writing, drawing, composing poems, or giving lengthy lectures about the virtues of the Buddha to exhaust the qualities of the Buddha. The virtue of the Buddha is a vast ocean. Having no limit, it is therefore unfathomable, illimitable, and certainly immeasurable. Deep and profound, it is simply endless and infinite.

Suppose, a Buddha starts to describe the qualities of another Buddha from the day that he attained enlightenment. That Buddha talks only on the qualities of the Buddha. He lives only one eon. During his full life, he teaches only the qualities of the Buddha. Then, finally, the eon comes to the end, but not the qualities of the Buddha.

Though there is no one in the world to adequately explain the qualities of the Buddha, there is a stanza composed by the Buddha himself to describe these qualities. This is a stanza that we Buddhists recite respectfully daily in the morning and evening. Here, the Buddha condensed the many virtues of the Buddha into nine great virtues. The stanza is, *“Such indeed is the Sublime One, worthy, perfectly enlightened, perfect in true knowledge and conduct, well-gone, knower of the world, supreme trainer of persons to be tamed, teacher of gods and humans, enlightened and exalted.”* (Itipiso bhagavâ araham, sammâ sambuddho, vijiâ carana sampanno, sugato, loka vidu, anuttaro purisa damma sârathi, satthâ devamanussanam, buddho, bhagavâ'ti)

Let us all recollect and reflect upon these qualities of the Buddha. We should strive to properly understand each and every one of them. Then, we all can understand, develop, and cultivate a wonderful and marvelous quality that is a factor

that leads us to the entering of the path as a stream-enterer. That factor is *saddhâ*, meaning confidence, conviction, trust or faith with wisdom.

According to *The Numerical Discourses of the Buddha*,⁴⁴ the Buddha has said that of all gaining, gaining of *saddhâ* is the best because it is one of unsurpassable gaining. Therefore, let us arouse confidence in the Buddha, Dhamma, and the Sangha. Let us all honor, respect, and revere the Buddha daily with utmost confidence and wisdom. May we all comprehend the immeasurable qualities of the Buddha, Dhamma, and the Sangha. By the power of the Triple Gem may all beings live happily and peacefully!

May the virtues of the Buddha reflect upon my mind
all the time!

May the virtues of the Dhamma reflect upon my mind
all the time!

May the virtues of the Sangha reflect upon my mind
all the time!

May my mind be released from all defilement!

that leads us to the entering of the path as a stream-enterer. That factor is *saddhâ*, meaning confidence, conviction, trust or faith with wisdom.

According to *The Numerical Discourses of the Buddha*,⁴⁴ the Buddha has said that of all gaining, gaining of *saddhâ* is the best because it is one of unsurpassable gaining. Therefore, let us arouse confidence in the Buddha, Dhamma, and the Sangha. Let us all honor, respect, and revere the Buddha daily with utmost confidence and wisdom. May we all comprehend the immeasurable qualities of the Buddha, Dhamma, and the Sangha. By the power of the Triple Gem may all beings live happily and peacefully!

May the virtues of the Buddha reflect upon my mind
all the time!

May the virtues of the Dhamma reflect upon my mind
all the time!

May the virtues of the Sangha reflect upon my mind
all the time!

May my mind be released from all defilement!

Chapter 3

What the Buddha Really Taught

We have heard many things about the Dhamma as the Buddha taught. Scholars have written numerous books and articles about the Buddha's teachings. There are different commentaries, sub-commentaries and sub-sub-commentaries on them. As we see, with all these explanations, descriptions, concepts, attitudes, ideas and opinions, what has happened is that the real Dhamma has not been revealed, but obscured, covered, and concealed. As the Buddha himself said, “*Dhamma* is flourished, illuminated only when it is revealed, not when it is covered, concealed (*vivatova virocati no paticchanno*).”

It is because of these different views, ideas, and opinions concerning the Dhamma that we miss the opportunity that we have to reduce *dukkha* and even eventually completely cut off *samsâric* fetters and attain enlightenment. Though the Buddha has taught us a clear path to purification, with the introduction of new commentaries and sub-commentaries to the Dhamma, that clear path has been covered with dust. These so-called illustrations have become hindrances. In this manner, the signboards on the path have themselves become roadblocks or stumbling blocks to the path to purification. In other words, “road directions” have become wrong directions.

Our Buddha taught the real Dhamma to enlighten humans and *devas* to provide a way for them to cross over to the other shore of the *samsâric* flood. The Buddha did not appreciate *samsâric* journey even for a moment. Instead, he always encouraged his disciples and followers to cross over as soon as possible. The Buddha very clearly taught us that beings are wandering in *samsâra* facing birth and death again and again without finding the end like a knotted ball of thread or a ball of soft grass. He further said that beings are born again

Chapter 3

What the Buddha Really Taught

We have heard many things about the Dhamma as the Buddha taught. Scholars have written numerous books and articles about the Buddha's teachings. There are different commentaries, sub-commentaries and sub-sub-commentaries on them. As we see, with all these explanations, descriptions, concepts, attitudes, ideas and opinions, what has happened is that the real Dhamma has not been revealed, but obscured, covered, and concealed. As the Buddha himself said, “*Dhamma* is flourished, illuminated only when it is revealed, not when it is covered, concealed (*vivatova virocati no paticchanno*).”

It is because of these different views, ideas, and opinions concerning the Dhamma that we miss the opportunity that we have to reduce *dukkha* and even eventually completely cut off *samsâric* fetters and attain enlightenment. Though the Buddha has taught us a clear path to purification, with the introduction of new commentaries and sub-commentaries to the Dhamma, that clear path has been covered with dust. These so-called illustrations have become hindrances. In this manner, the signboards on the path have themselves become roadblocks or stumbling blocks to the path to purification. In other words, “road directions” have become wrong directions.

Our Buddha taught the real Dhamma to enlighten humans and *devas* to provide a way for them to cross over to the other shore of the *samsâric* flood. The Buddha did not appreciate *samsâric* journey even for a moment. Instead, he always encouraged his disciples and followers to cross over as soon as possible. The Buddha very clearly taught us that beings are wandering in *samsâra* facing birth and death again and again without finding the end like a knotted ball of thread or a ball of soft grass. He further said that beings are born again

and again and die again and again swelling the grave yards with corpses because of not knowing the Four Noble Truths and Dependent Origination.⁴⁵

Today, most people are engaged in many different kinds of rites and rituals, such as praying to gods rather than practicing the Dhamma taught by the Buddha. They don't accept re-becoming or rebirth, a world after this, the good and bad results of supporting or harassing one's parents, spontaneous beings, etc. The Buddha has clearly mentioned these as wrong views. Wrong view is a dangerous thing. Those who have wrong views end up in woeful states of hells or animal realms. In the Dhammapada, the Buddha said, "*Micchâditthi samâdânâ sattâ gacchanti duggatim.*" (Those beings who have wrong views go to woeful states.)⁴⁶

Our Buddha taught the Dhamma for our right understanding. The first step of the Middle Path, which he rediscovered is also right understanding. The Dhammapada records that out of great compassion for us, he said, "Just as a border city is closely guarded both within and without, even so, guard yourself. Do not let slip this opportunity [for spiritual growth]. For those who let slip this opportunity grieve indeed when consigned to hell."⁴⁷

We know that there are people who sarcastically question "Where is the hell?" Questioning is a good thing, but what is to be done is not simply to show that they are ignorant of such things. They should seek what is the truth and do more good deeds rather than wasting their precious time and rare opportunity. Whether there is a hell or heaven, let us understand that there are good results for those who do good and bad results for those who do bad. Let us understand clearly that there is no consolation, no real freedom of mind from all defilements without understanding and practicing the true teachings of the Buddha.

The real teaching, real Dhamma he taught us is not our culture, civilization, history, religion, or philosophy. It is the Dhamma that he realized, penetrated, and taught with clear words, phrases, and entirely perfect. In that Dhamma, there

and again and die again and again swelling the grave yards with corpses because of not knowing the Four Noble Truths and Dependent Origination.⁴⁵

Today, most people are engaged in many different kinds of rites and rituals, such as praying to gods rather than practicing the Dhamma taught by the Buddha. They don't accept re-becoming or rebirth, a world after this, the good and bad results of supporting or harassing one's parents, spontaneous beings, etc. The Buddha has clearly mentioned these as wrong views. Wrong view is a dangerous thing. Those who have wrong views end up in woeful states of hells or animal realms. In the Dhammapada, the Buddha said, "*Micchâditthi samâdânâ sattâ gacchanti duggatim.*" (Those beings who have wrong views go to woeful states.)⁴⁶

Our Buddha taught the Dhamma for our right understanding. The first step of the Middle Path, which he rediscovered is also right understanding. The Dhammapada records that out of great compassion for us, he said, "Just as a border city is closely guarded both within and without, even so, guard yourself. Do not let slip this opportunity [for spiritual growth]. For those who let slip this opportunity grieve indeed when consigned to hell."⁴⁷

We know that there are people who sarcastically question "Where is the hell?" Questioning is a good thing, but what is to be done is not simply to show that they are ignorant of such things. They should seek what is the truth and do more good deeds rather than wasting their precious time and rare opportunity. Whether there is a hell or heaven, let us understand that there are good results for those who do good and bad results for those who do bad. Let us understand clearly that there is no consolation, no real freedom of mind from all defilements without understanding and practicing the true teachings of the Buddha.

The real teaching, real Dhamma he taught us is not our culture, civilization, history, religion, or philosophy. It is the Dhamma that he realized, penetrated, and taught with clear words, phrases, and entirely perfect. In that Dhamma, there

are no embellishments and discredibilities. It is perfectly pure Dhamma. That was taught equally to both humans and *devās*. That is what we call 'the Sublime Dhamma.' There are seven different categories among them and thirty-seven factors, which are called the Thirty Seven Factors of Enlightenment. They are called so because they are the factors which lead us towards the attainment of enlightenment.

These seven categories are like the heartwood of a tree. Whatever the Buddha taught us during the forty-five years of his life, they all are based on these seven categories of the thirty-seven factors of enlightenment. Hence, let us now clearly understand that whenever scholars speak or write now-a-days about subjects such as Buddhism, Buddhist history, Buddhist philosophy and so on, if they do not talk or write on at least one of these topics, their interpretations or explanations are not the teachings of the Buddha. They are quite far from the real teachings of the Buddha.

Simply because of talking and writing on various things in the name of Buddhism, it will never become the real teachings of the Buddha. Such things may be a counterfeit Dhamma. The core of the teaching is always hidden from those who seek the Dhamma. Therefore, such people never know that there is a core in the teaching of the Buddha. Today, the traditional Buddhists are simply following Buddhism as another religion by performing various types of rites and rituals. However, the real teaching is covered, concealed from them with the dust of rites and rituals and colorful ceremonies. Most of these people have forgotten morality, concentration, and wisdom (*sila, samâdhi, paññā*) as the training for the path to purification. Some people confine themselves solely to offerings or practicing generosity instead of doing all three meritorious deeds namely, generosity, morality, and meditation. Some others have modified morality as an enterprise. They want only morality, thinking that it is the most important thing in the teaching. They do not know the real purpose of this teaching. The real purpose of this teaching is final Nibbâna without clinging. In other words, complete eradication of defilements is to attain the state of non-

are no embellishments and discredibilities. It is perfectly pure Dhamma. That was taught equally to both humans and *devās*. That is what we call 'the Sublime Dhamma.' There are seven different categories among them and thirty-seven factors, which are called the Thirty Seven Factors of Enlightenment. They are called so because they are the factors which lead us towards the attainment of enlightenment.

These seven categories are like the heartwood of a tree. Whatever the Buddha taught us during the forty-five years of his life, they all are based on these seven categories of the thirty-seven factors of enlightenment. Hence, let us now clearly understand that whenever scholars speak or write now-a-days about subjects such as Buddhism, Buddhist history, Buddhist philosophy and so on, if they do not talk or write on at least one of these topics, their interpretations or explanations are not the teachings of the Buddha. They are quite far from the real teachings of the Buddha.

Simply because of talking and writing on various things in the name of Buddhism, it will never become the real teachings of the Buddha. Such things may be a counterfeit Dhamma. The core of the teaching is always hidden from those who seek the Dhamma. Therefore, such people never know that there is a core in the teaching of the Buddha. Today, the traditional Buddhists are simply following Buddhism as another religion by performing various types of rites and rituals. However, the real teaching is covered, concealed from them with the dust of rites and rituals and colorful ceremonies. Most of these people have forgotten morality, concentration, and wisdom (*sila, samâdhi, paññā*) as the training for the path to purification. Some people confine themselves solely to offerings or practicing generosity instead of doing all three meritorious deeds namely, generosity, morality, and meditation. Some others have modified morality as an enterprise. They want only morality, thinking that it is the most important thing in the teaching. They do not know the real purpose of this teaching. The real purpose of this teaching is final Nibbâna without clinging. In other words, complete eradication of defilements is to attain the state of non-

attachment (*anupâdâ parinibbâna*).⁴⁸ Furthermore, we see some people who practice only meditation. That itself is not the real way of practicing. They ignore the importance of morality and generosity. They themselves are on the path, but something is lacking. This means one should practice all three aspects: generosity, morality, and meditation so that they lead one to the real path as morality, meditation, and wisdom. The path itself should be completed with the tenfold path.⁴⁹

According to the *The Greater Discourse on the Simile of the Heartwood* in *The Middle Length Sayings of the Buddha*,⁵⁰ this is how different people seek the heartwood of a tree. Some people don't know what the heartwood of the tree is. Having gone to the foot of the tree, they bring leaves and twigs mistaking them to the heartwood of the tree. Some others bring outer bark, some others bring the inner bark, and some others bring the sapwood as the heartwood. There are only a few who really know the heartwood of the tree.

Buddhism is a tree. This is now 2603 years old. Our Buddha planted this tree. In this tree we also find leaves and twigs, outer bark, inner bark, sapwood, and certainly invaluable heartwood, which nobody can find anywhere else. Those who don't know the heartwood of this tree of Buddhism have embraced simply fame, gain, praise, rites and rituals, different colorful ceremonies, and many different kinds of *pujas* (like *Buddha puja*, *Bodhi puja*, 84,000 oil lamp *puja*, seventy-three *puja* for knowledge and such and such a *puja*). These are the leaves and twigs of the tree of Buddhism. Some people have grasped the outer bark of the tree, which is the great processions, great *dâna*, and many more and more things with the adjective '*Mahâ*' (great), like *Mahâ pahan pujâ*, *Mahâ parade*, *Mahâ Mangalyaya*. Of course, in truth, there is nothing great in these, but very small pith. Some people have embraced the inner bark. That is morality in Buddhism. That is important, but that is not the core of Buddhism. Still some others grasp the sapwood of the tree. Sapwood of Buddhism is *samadhi*, the concentration. That is not the core, but sapwood. As we mentioned above, there are only a few who really know what the core or heartwood is.

attachment (*anupâdâ parinibbâna*).⁴⁸ Furthermore, we see some people who practice only meditation. That itself is not the real way of practicing. They ignore the importance of morality and generosity. They themselves are on the path, but something is lacking. This means one should practice all three aspects: generosity, morality, and meditation so that they lead one to the real path as morality, meditation, and wisdom. The path itself should be completed with the tenfold path.⁴⁹

According to the *The Greater Discourse on the Simile of the Heartwood* in *The Middle Length Sayings of the Buddha*,⁵⁰ this is how different people seek the heartwood of a tree. Some people don't know what the heartwood of the tree is. Having gone to the foot of the tree, they bring leaves and twigs mistaking them to the heartwood of the tree. Some others bring outer bark, some others bring the inner bark, and some others bring the sapwood as the heartwood. There are only a few who really know the heartwood of the tree.

Buddhism is a tree. This is now 2603 years old. Our Buddha planted this tree. In this tree we also find leaves and twigs, outer bark, inner bark, sapwood, and certainly invaluable heartwood, which nobody can find anywhere else. Those who don't know the heartwood of this tree of Buddhism have embraced simply fame, gain, praise, rites and rituals, different colorful ceremonies, and many different kinds of *pujas* (like *Buddha puja*, *Bodhi puja*, 84,000 oil lamp *puja*, seventy-three *puja* for knowledge and such and such a *puja*). These are the leaves and twigs of the tree of Buddhism. Some people have grasped the outer bark of the tree, which is the great processions, great *dâna*, and many more and more things with the adjective '*Mahâ*' (great), like *Mahâ pahan pujâ*, *Mahâ parade*, *Mahâ Mangalyaya*. Of course, in truth, there is nothing great in these, but very small pith. Some people have embraced the inner bark. That is morality in Buddhism. That is important, but that is not the core of Buddhism. Still some others grasp the sapwood of the tree. Sapwood of Buddhism is *samadhi*, the concentration. That is not the core, but sapwood. As we mentioned above, there are only a few who really know what the core or heartwood is.

That is wisdom (*vipassana*) in the teaching of the Buddha. That is the real teaching taught by the Buddha through his deep wisdom, that he gained as experiential wisdom. This itself is not to be grasped, but to be understood, and just to cross over the flood of defilement.

Therefore, we must understand this core, the heartwood of Buddhism. One who knows this Dhamma based on *vipassanâ*, is a person who lives unattached to life in this world. Let us all strive to understand the core teaching of the Buddha and put it into practice daily, so we can lead a simple, contented, unattached, and peaceful human life.

In this chapter, it is intended to understand the thirty-seven factors as the heartwood of the teaching of the Buddha, their basic meaning and how they are to be practiced, developed, and cultivated by us.

The Dhamma he realized are the thirty-seven factors of enlightenment. The Buddha clearly pointed this out in the *Mahâ Parinibbâna Sutta* of *The Long Discourses of the Buddha*. While he was dwelling in the great wood in *Vaishâlî*, addressing Venerable *Ananda*, he said, “*Ananda* go now and summon all the monks living in *Vaishali* to the guest hall.” Then, Venerable *Ananda* did so and informed the Buddha. Thereafter, the Buddha approached the hall and addressing the monks said, “Monks, those Dhamma which I have discovered and proclaimed should be thoroughly leaned by you, practiced, developed and cultivated so that this holy life may endure for a long time, that it may be for the benefit and happiness of the multitude, out of compassion for the world, for the benefit and happiness of *devâs* and humans. What are those Dhamma? They are: The four foundations of mindfulness, the four right efforts, the four roads to power, the five spiritual faculties, the five mental powers, the seven factors of enlightenment, and the Noble Eightfold Path.”⁵¹

In accordance with this passage, it is very clear that what the Buddha has really taught us as the Sublime Dhamma (*Saddhamma*). That is solely the thirty-seven factors of enlightenment. Whoever studies these thirty-seven factors

That is wisdom (*vipassana*) in the teaching of the Buddha. That is the real teaching taught by the Buddha through his deep wisdom, that he gained as experiential wisdom. This itself is not to be grasped, but to be understood, and just to cross over the flood of defilement.

Therefore, we must understand this core, the heartwood of Buddhism. One who knows this Dhamma based on *vipassanâ*, is a person who lives unattached to life in this world. Let us all strive to understand the core teaching of the Buddha and put it into practice daily, so we can lead a simple, contented, unattached, and peaceful human life.

In this chapter, it is intended to understand the thirty-seven factors as the heartwood of the teaching of the Buddha, their basic meaning and how they are to be practiced, developed, and cultivated by us.

The Dhamma he realized are the thirty-seven factors of enlightenment. The Buddha clearly pointed this out in the *Mahâ Parinibbâna Sutta* of *The Long Discourses of the Buddha*. While he was dwelling in the great wood in *Vaishâlî*, addressing Venerable *Ananda*, he said, “*Ananda* go now and summon all the monks living in *Vaishali* to the guest hall.” Then, Venerable *Ananda* did so and informed the Buddha. Thereafter, the Buddha approached the hall and addressing the monks said, “Monks, those Dhamma which I have discovered and proclaimed should be thoroughly leaned by you, practiced, developed and cultivated so that this holy life may endure for a long time, that it may be for the benefit and happiness of the multitude, out of compassion for the world, for the benefit and happiness of *devâs* and humans. What are those Dhamma? They are: The four foundations of mindfulness, the four right efforts, the four roads to power, the five spiritual faculties, the five mental powers, the seven factors of enlightenment, and the Noble Eightfold Path.”⁵¹

In accordance with this passage, it is very clear that what the Buddha has really taught us as the Sublime Dhamma (*Saddhamma*). That is solely the thirty-seven factors of enlightenment. Whoever studies these thirty-seven factors

and puts them into practice and lives accordingly, will definitely be a real follower of the Buddha Dhamma. That is the real path, the unmistakable path to purity. Buddhism is the way to real peace, real happiness, and liberation.

Thirty-Seven Factors of Enlightenment and Their Basic Meanings

The thirty-seven factors are as follows:

1. The four establishments of mindfulness	4
2. The four right kinds of striving	4
3. The four bases to power	4
4. The five spiritual faculties	5
5. The five mental powers	5
6. The seven factors of enlightenment	7
7. The Noble Eightfold Path.	8
Total	= 37

(a). The Four Establishments of Mindfulness

The first and foremost thing that Our Buddha has revealed here is the four establishments of mindfulness. There are four places where we should establish mindfulness. Whoever practices and establishes mindfulness on these four places, he/she could understand and see the thirty-seven factors of enlightenment. This is the only way that Our Buddha taught for the purification of beings, for the overcoming of sorrow and lamentation, for the disappearance of pain and grief, for reaching the path, and for the attainment of *Nibbāna*.

Once, the incomparable leader of peace, the giver of peace, Our Buddha said, “Monks, those for whom you have compassion and who think you should be heeded whether friends or colleagues, relatives or kinsmen these you should exhort, settle, and establish in the development of the four establishments of mindfulness.”⁵²

When we study and practice the four establishments of mindfulness, we can understand factors from the great discourse of the establishments of mindfulness of *Digha*

and puts them into practice and lives accordingly, will definitely be a real follower of the Buddha Dhamma. That is the real path, the unmistakable path to purity. Buddhism is the way to real peace, real happiness, and liberation.

Thirty-Seven Factors of Enlightenment and Their Basic Meanings

The thirty-seven factors are as follows:

1. The four establishments of mindfulness	4
2. The four right kinds of striving	4
3. The four bases to power	4
4. The five spiritual faculties	5
5. The five mental powers	5
6. The seven factors of enlightenment	7
7. The Noble Eightfold Path.	8
Total	= 37

(a). The Four Establishments of Mindfulness

The first and foremost thing that Our Buddha has revealed here is the four establishments of mindfulness. There are four places where we should establish mindfulness. Whoever practices and establishes mindfulness on these four places, he/she could understand and see the thirty-seven factors of enlightenment. This is the only way that Our Buddha taught for the purification of beings, for the overcoming of sorrow and lamentation, for the disappearance of pain and grief, for reaching the path, and for the attainment of *Nibbāna*.

Once, the incomparable leader of peace, the giver of peace, Our Buddha said, “Monks, those for whom you have compassion and who think you should be heeded whether friends or colleagues, relatives or kinsmen these you should exhort, settle, and establish in the development of the four establishments of mindfulness.”⁵²

When we study and practice the four establishments of mindfulness, we can understand factors from the great discourse of the establishments of mindfulness of *Digha*

Nikâya (*Sutta* No. 16), *Majjhima Nikâya* (*Sutta* No.10) *Samyutta Nikâya* (chapter 47) and *Anguttara Nikâya* (The Book of Nines).

(b). The Four Kinds of Striving

There are four facets of things to arouse and establish our energy, striving, and effort. Those four are:

Prevention: Determination to prevent un-arisen evil, unwholesome states of mind from arising, by making effort, arousing energy, applying mind and striving.

Abandoning: Determination to abandon evil unwholesome states of mind that have already arisen, by making effort, arousing energy, applying mind and striving.

Developing: Determination to develop wholesome mental states that have not yet arisen, by making effort, arousing energy, applying mind and striving.

Maintaining: Determination to maintain and perfect wholesome mental states already arisen and not to allow them to disappear, but to bring them to growth, maturity and to the full perfection of development by making effort, arousing energy, applying mind, and striving.

Mind should be restrained from arising un-arisen unwholesome thoughts. What is to be abandoned are the unwholesome thought already arisen in mind. What are to be developed are the wholesome thoughts and what are to be maintained are the wholesome thoughts which have already arisen in mind.

According to the *Padhâna Sutta* of *The Numerical Discourses of the Buddha*,⁵³ for the arousing of striving one should arouse intention first. For this purpose, one should make effort, arouse energy, apply mind and strive on with diligence. All humans born to this world should abandon the unwholesome and develop what is wholesome. Once Our Buddha said, “Monks, abandoning the unwholesome, that is possible. If it were impossible, I would never tell you to do so. Only since it is possible, I say so. When it is abandoned, if it's

Nikâya (*Sutta* No. 16), *Majjhima Nikâya* (*Sutta* No.10) *Samyutta Nikâya* (chapter 47) and *Anguttara Nikâya* (The Book of Nines).

(b). The Four Kinds of Striving

There are four facets of things to arouse and establish our energy, striving, and effort. Those four are:

Prevention: Determination to prevent un-arisen evil, unwholesome states of mind from arising, by making effort, arousing energy, applying mind and striving.

Abandoning: Determination to abandon evil unwholesome states of mind that have already arisen, by making effort, arousing energy, applying mind and striving.

Developing: Determination to develop wholesome mental states that have not yet arisen, by making effort, arousing energy, applying mind and striving.

Maintaining: Determination to maintain and perfect wholesome mental states already arisen and not to allow them to disappear, but to bring them to growth, maturity and to the full perfection of development by making effort, arousing energy, applying mind, and striving.

Mind should be restrained from arising un-arisen unwholesome thoughts. What is to be abandoned are the unwholesome thought already arisen in mind. What are to be developed are the wholesome thoughts and what are to be maintained are the wholesome thoughts which have already arisen in mind.

According to the *Padhâna Sutta* of *The Numerical Discourses of the Buddha*,⁵³ for the arousing of striving one should arouse intention first. For this purpose, one should make effort, arouse energy, apply mind and strive on with diligence. All humans born to this world should abandon the unwholesome and develop what is wholesome. Once Our Buddha said, “Monks, abandoning the unwholesome, that is possible. If it were impossible, I would never tell you to do so. Only since it is possible, I say so. When it is abandoned, if it's

leading to the unbeneficial, to your own unsatisfactoriness, I would never say so. It is because it leads to your own benefit and happiness I say so.”

(c). The Four Bases or Roads to Power

The bases of power are called *iddhi* in *Pâli*. This means that which is difficult to perform by a regular person, such as going through the air, walking on water without breaking the surface, and going through walls. There are five different kinds of knowledge that could be achieved as a result of developing the four *jhânas*. They are:

1. Miraculous power
2. Clair audience
3. Ability to read others' minds
4. Ability to read one's past lives
5. Clairvoyance

All these are kinds of worldly knowledge. This means even though you have developed all these different kinds of knowledge, you are still not free from defilement. Therefore, there is no attainment of enlightenment. Any person from any religious or social background can achieve those kinds of knowledge if he/she practiced and developed. However, there is a different kind of knowledge which is unique to the Buddha. He rediscovered this and this can be found only in his teaching (Buddha-Dhamma). That is the knowledge of complete destruction of defilement (*âsavakkhayañâna*).

Among those six kinds of knowledge, the first one is miraculous power through which one can perform various types of miracles such as those Venerable *Cula Pantaka* did. He had an older brother who received ordination in the Order of the Buddha. After his ordination he wanted to share that bliss together with his younger brother, *Cula Pantaka*. Thus he was also ordained. After ordination, he had to memorize many different things like discourses and stanzas. But that itself was his deficiency. He could not remember even a four-line stanza after trying for four months. Thereafter, his older brother asked him to disrobe and go home. However, *Cula*

leading to the unbeneficial, to your own unsatisfactoriness, I would never say so. It is because it leads to your own benefit and happiness I say so.”

(c). The Four Bases or Roads to Power

The bases of power are called *iddhi* in *Pâli*. This means that which is difficult to perform by a regular person, such as going through the air, walking on water without breaking the surface, and going through walls. There are five different kinds of knowledge that could be achieved as a result of developing the four *jhânas*. They are:

1. Miraculous power
2. Clair audience
3. Ability to read others' minds
4. Ability to read one's past lives
5. Clairvoyance

All these are kinds of worldly knowledge. This means even though you have developed all these different kinds of knowledge, you are still not free from defilement. Therefore, there is no attainment of enlightenment. Any person from any religious or social background can achieve those kinds of knowledge if he/she practiced and developed. However, there is a different kind of knowledge which is unique to the Buddha. He rediscovered this and this can be found only in his teaching (Buddha-Dhamma). That is the knowledge of complete destruction of defilement (*âsavakkhayañâna*).

Among those six kinds of knowledge, the first one is miraculous power through which one can perform various types of miracles such as those Venerable *Cula Pantaka* did. He had an older brother who received ordination in the Order of the Buddha. After his ordination he wanted to share that bliss together with his younger brother, *Cula Pantaka*. Thus he was also ordained. After ordination, he had to memorize many different things like discourses and stanzas. But that itself was his deficiency. He could not remember even a four-line stanza after trying for four months. Thereafter, his older brother asked him to disrobe and go home. However, *Cula*

Pantaka did not want to disrobe. It was because of his brother's order he decided to disrobe. With that intention, he left his meditation cell. Then, the Buddha saw him departing the place with a sad face and crying. When our Buddha asked, he revealed the reason. The Buddha gave him a piece of white cloth and asked him to recite “removing dust, removing dust” while watching the sun and rubbing the piece of cloth in his hands. He did so, and finally having realized the nature of impurities in his own body and mind, he became an Enlightened One. After that, he had the special power to perform miracles and with that he created 1000 identical monks in the monastery. These types of things are called miracles.

Among all the disciples of the Buddha, the foremost monk for the performance of miracles was Venerable *Mahā Moggallāna*. Nevertheless, Our Buddha did not appreciate this type of miracles. He clearly said what he appreciated was the miracle of preaching. In order to gain all miraculous powers, one should have to have four bases for power (*iddhipāda*). They are the bases, roads or foundations for miraculous power. Those four bases are:

1. Intention as a base
2. Striving as a base
3. Consciousness as a base
4. Investigation as a base

(d). The Five Spiritual Faculties

Whenever we talk about faculties, it is true that it reminds us the six sense of faculties namely; the eye, the ear, the nose, the tongue, the body, and the mind. If we ask 'how many senses do we have' of a Western child, he simply says there are five senses. They are the eye, ear, nose, tongue, and the body, but Our Buddha has taught us clearly that our mind itself is a sense. That is the most important one without which none of them can play their roles.

However, in this section, though we talk about faculties, they are not the sense faculties but spiritual faculties. They are

Pantaka did not want to disrobe. It was because of his brother's order he decided to disrobe. With that intention, he left his meditation cell. Then, the Buddha saw him departing the place with a sad face and crying. When our Buddha asked, he revealed the reason. The Buddha gave him a piece of white cloth and asked him to recite “removing dust, removing dust” while watching the sun and rubbing the piece of cloth in his hands. He did so, and finally having realized the nature of impurities in his own body and mind, he became an Enlightened One. After that, he had the special power to perform miracles and with that he created 1000 identical monks in the monastery. These types of things are called miracles.

Among all the disciples of the Buddha, the foremost monk for the performance of miracles was Venerable *Mahā Moggallāna*. Nevertheless, Our Buddha did not appreciate this type of miracles. He clearly said what he appreciated was the miracle of preaching. In order to gain all miraculous powers, one should have to have four bases for power (*iddhipāda*). They are the bases, roads or foundations for miraculous power. Those four bases are:

1. Intention as a base
2. Striving as a base
3. Consciousness as a base
4. Investigation as a base

(d). The Five Spiritual Faculties

Whenever we talk about faculties, it is true that it reminds us the six sense of faculties namely; the eye, the ear, the nose, the tongue, the body, and the mind. If we ask 'how many senses do we have' of a Western child, he simply says there are five senses. They are the eye, ear, nose, tongue, and the body, but Our Buddha has taught us clearly that our mind itself is a sense. That is the most important one without which none of them can play their roles.

However, in this section, though we talk about faculties, they are not the sense faculties but spiritual faculties. They are

totally in the mind and are to be aroused, developed, cultivated and made much of by us so that they become spiritual powers. Those five spiritual faculties are as follows.

1. The spiritual faculty of confidence
2. The spiritual faculty of energy
3. The spiritual faculty of mindfulness
4. The spiritual faculty of concentration
5. The spiritual faculty of wisdom

Whenever we purify and develop our mind, these five are developed and cultivated; finally, they themselves become spiritual powers. Thus, in paralleled with the five spiritual faculties, there are five spiritual powers as well.

(e). The Five Spiritual Powers

(They are the same factors as the spiritual faculties above)

(f). The Seven Factors of Enlightenment

The compound *Pāli* term *Bodhi+anga* (bojjhanga) literally means enlightenment factors. They are called thus because when they are developed and cultivated, they lead us to the attainment of enlightenment. *Bodhi* here means 'enlightenment.' There are three kinds of Enlightened Ones in accordance with how enlightenment is gained. They are:

1. Fully Enlightened One (*Samma Sambuddha*)
2. Silent Buddha (*Pacceka Buddha*)
3. Enlightened One (*Arahant Buddha*)

For all three kinds of attainment of enlightenment, one should develop and cultivate these seven factors of enlightenment. Since they are to be developed properly and systematically in that, they pave the way to the realization of the Four Noble Truths. They are called *Sambojjhanga*.

Our Buddha has developed and cultivated them well and also well expounded them for us. These seven enlightenment factors are:

1. The enlightenment factor of mindfulness

totally in the mind and are to be aroused, developed, cultivated and made much of by us so that they become spiritual powers. Those five spiritual faculties are as follows.

1. The spiritual faculty of confidence
2. The spiritual faculty of energy
3. The spiritual faculty of mindfulness
4. The spiritual faculty of concentration
5. The spiritual faculty of wisdom

Whenever we purify and develop our mind, these five are developed and cultivated; finally, they themselves become spiritual powers. Thus, in paralleled with the five spiritual faculties, there are five spiritual powers as well.

(e). The Five Spiritual Powers

(They are the same factors as the spiritual faculties above)

(f). The Seven Factors of Enlightenment

The compound *Pāli* term *Bodhi+anga* (bojjhanga) literally means enlightenment factors. They are called thus because when they are developed and cultivated, they lead us to the attainment of enlightenment. *Bodhi* here means 'enlightenment.' There are three kinds of Enlightened Ones in accordance with how enlightenment is gained. They are:

1. Fully Enlightened One (*Samma Sambuddha*)
2. Silent Buddha (*Pacceka Buddha*)
3. Enlightened One (*Arahant Buddha*)

For all three kinds of attainment of enlightenment, one should develop and cultivate these seven factors of enlightenment. Since they are to be developed properly and systematically in that, they pave the way to the realization of the Four Noble Truths. They are called *Sambojjhanga*.

Our Buddha has developed and cultivated them well and also well expounded them for us. These seven enlightenment factors are:

1. The enlightenment factor of mindfulness

2. The enlightenment factor of investigation of dhamma
3. The enlightenment factor of energy
4. The enlightenment factor of rapture
5. The enlightenment factor of tranquility
6. The enlightenment factor of concentration
7. The enlightenment factor of equanimity.

(g). The Noble Eightfold Path

This path to liberation can be found only in the teaching of the Buddha. This is the Middle Way, Middle Path that Our Buddha introduced and illustrated in his first sermon.⁵⁴ It was for the first time that the Buddha pointed out the importance of avoiding the two extremes of sensual indulgence and self-mortification. Then, he enunciated the path to follow as the Middle Path, the Noble Eightfold Path, which brings forth knowledge, cessation of defilement, peace, direct knowledge, enlightenment, and *Nibbâna*.

The Noble Eightfold Path is the stream that propels the individual to *Nibbâna*. When each and every individual attains enlightenment as an *arahant*, he/she declares, “Birth is destroyed, lived the holy life, done what had to be done, and there is nothing more to be done. (*Khîna jâti vusitam brahmacariyam katam karaniyam nâparam ittathâyâti.*) Here, we come across a phrase 'lived the holy life.' What does the holy life mean? As Venerable *Sâriputta* himself said, it is the Noble Eightfold Path.⁵⁵

According to the *Bhikkhu Sutta* of *Magga Samyutta* of the *The Connected Discourses of the Buddha*, a certain *bhikkhu* approached the Buddha and said, “Venerable sir, it is said, 'the holy life, the holy life.' What, Venerable sir, is the holy life? What is the final goal of the holy life?” The Buddha then said, “This Noble Eightfold Path, *bhikkhu*, is the holy life; that is right understanding, right thought, right speech, right action, right livelihood, right effort, right mindfulness and right concentration. The destruction of lust, the destruction of hatred, the destruction of delusion; this is the final goal of the holy life.”⁵⁶ Again another *bhikkhu* approached the Buddha

2. The enlightenment factor of investigation of dhamma
3. The enlightenment factor of energy
4. The enlightenment factor of rapture
5. The enlightenment factor of tranquility
6. The enlightenment factor of concentration
7. The enlightenment factor of equanimity.

(g). The Noble Eightfold Path

This path to liberation can be found only in the teaching of the Buddha. This is the Middle Way, Middle Path that Our Buddha introduced and illustrated in his first sermon.⁵⁴ It was for the first time that the Buddha pointed out the importance of avoiding the two extremes of sensual indulgence and self-mortification. Then, he enunciated the path to follow as the Middle Path, the Noble Eightfold Path, which brings forth knowledge, cessation of defilement, peace, direct knowledge, enlightenment, and *Nibbâna*.

The Noble Eightfold Path is the stream that propels the individual to *Nibbâna*. When each and every individual attains enlightenment as an *arahant*, he/she declares, “Birth is destroyed, lived the holy life, done what had to be done, and there is nothing more to be done. (*Khîna jâti vusitam brahmacariyam katam karaniyam nâparam ittathâyâti.*) Here, we come across a phrase 'lived the holy life.' What does the holy life mean? As Venerable *Sâriputta* himself said, it is the Noble Eightfold Path.⁵⁵

According to the *Bhikkhu Sutta* of *Magga Samyutta* of the *The Connected Discourses of the Buddha*, a certain *bhikkhu* approached the Buddha and said, “Venerable sir, it is said, 'the holy life, the holy life.' What, Venerable sir, is the holy life? What is the final goal of the holy life?” The Buddha then said, “This Noble Eightfold Path, *bhikkhu*, is the holy life; that is right understanding, right thought, right speech, right action, right livelihood, right effort, right mindfulness and right concentration. The destruction of lust, the destruction of hatred, the destruction of delusion; this is the final goal of the holy life.”⁵⁶ Again another *bhikkhu* approached the Buddha

and asked, *Bhante*, it is said, “the Deathless, the Deathless.’ What now, *Bhante*, is the Deathless? What is the path leading to the Deathless?” Thereupon, the Buddha said, “The destruction of lust, the destruction of hatred, the destruction of delusion; this is called the Deathless. This Noble Eightfold Path is the path leading to the Deathless.”⁵⁷

In accordance with the *Brahmin Sutta* in *The Connected Discourses of the Buddha*, the Buddha has used several synonyms for the Noble Eightfold Path, such as '*brahmayâna*' (the divine vehicle), '*dhammayâna*' (the vehicle of Dhamma), and '*anuttara-samgâma-vijaya*' (unsurpassed victory in battle). One day the Venerable *Ananda* dressed and having taken his bowl and robe went to *Sâvatthi* for alms. On his way, he saw a *brahmin* named *Jânussoni* departing from the city in an all-white chariot drawn by mares. The horses yoked to it were white, its ornaments were white, the chariot was white, its upholstery was white, the reins, goad, and canopy were white, his turban, clothes, and sandals were white, and he was being fanned by a white chowry. Having seen this the people said, “Divine indeed, sir, is the vehicle! It appears to be a divine vehicle indeed sir!” Venerable *Ananda* having returned from alms round, and after meal, approached the Buddha and asked, “Venerable sir, is it possible to point out a divine vehicle in this Dhamma and Disciple?” Then, the Buddha said, “It is possible *Ananda*, “this is a designation for this Noble Eightfold Path: 'the divine vehicle' and the 'vehicle of Dhamma' and 'the unsurpassed victory in battle.’”⁵⁸

This Noble Eightfold Path is the only path for the attainment of *Nibbâna*, Liberation. The path has been designed as follows by *Tathâgata*, Our Buddha.

1. Right understanding
2. Right thought
3. Right speech
4. Right action
5. Right livelihood
6. Right effort
7. Right mindfulness
8. Right concentration

and asked, *Bhante*, it is said, “the Deathless, the Deathless.’ What now, *Bhante*, is the Deathless? What is the path leading to the Deathless?” Thereupon, the Buddha said, “The destruction of lust, the destruction of hatred, the destruction of delusion; this is called the Deathless. This Noble Eightfold Path is the path leading to the Deathless.”⁵⁷

In accordance with the *Brahmin Sutta* in *The Connected Discourses of the Buddha*, the Buddha has used several synonyms for the Noble Eightfold Path, such as '*brahmayâna*' (the divine vehicle), '*dhammayâna*' (the vehicle of Dhamma), and '*anuttara-samgâma-vijaya*' (unsurpassed victory in battle). One day the Venerable *Ananda* dressed and having taken his bowl and robe went to *Sâvatthi* for alms. On his way, he saw a *brahmin* named *Jânussoni* departing from the city in an all-white chariot drawn by mares. The horses yoked to it were white, its ornaments were white, the chariot was white, its upholstery was white, the reins, goad, and canopy were white, his turban, clothes, and sandals were white, and he was being fanned by a white chowry. Having seen this the people said, “Divine indeed, sir, is the vehicle! It appears to be a divine vehicle indeed sir!” Venerable *Ananda* having returned from alms round, and after meal, approached the Buddha and asked, “Venerable sir, is it possible to point out a divine vehicle in this Dhamma and Disciple?” Then, the Buddha said, “It is possible *Ananda*, “this is a designation for this Noble Eightfold Path: 'the divine vehicle' and the 'vehicle of Dhamma' and 'the unsurpassed victory in battle.’”⁵⁸

This Noble Eightfold Path is the only path for the attainment of *Nibbâna*, Liberation. The path has been designed as follows by *Tathâgata*, Our Buddha.

1. Right understanding
2. Right thought
3. Right speech
4. Right action
5. Right livelihood
6. Right effort
7. Right mindfulness
8. Right concentration

As the Buddha has mentioned in the discourse named the *Great Forty* in *The Middle Length Sayings of the Buddha*, Noble Eightfold Path which consists of eight factors is the path for those who are undergoing the training as trainees (*sekha*) and the path become Tenfold for those who have completed the path as Adept, Enlightened Ones (*asekha*).⁵⁹ This same factor is true to the phrase '*Dasa angehi samannâgato arahâti vuccati*' (The one who is endowed with Tenfold path is called *Arahâ*, the Enlightened One) in the Minor Anthologies.⁶⁰ The Noble Eightfold Path cannot be studied, practiced or developed from anywhere else means within any other faith or philosophy. Only the Buddhas reveal this path. Once Our Buddha himself said, "Of all paths, the Noble Eightfold Path is the best" (*maggânatthagiko settho*).

How to Practice and Develop the 37 Factors of Enlightenment

Following Buddhism means practicing and developing these Thirty-Seven Factors of Enlightenment. These factors, which the Buddha realized, proclaimed, and taught to all of us should be studied, understood, and followed according to his admonition. Then, that will be for the benefit and happiness of many gods and humans. Among these thirty-seven factors what we first come across is the four establishments of mindfulness. As the Buddha said, if one would practice, develop and cultivate these four establishments of mindfulness, that itself is the only way to the attainment of enlightenment, *Nibbâna*. These four establishments are part of the Noble Eightfold Path. They are dealt within the seventh factor of the path as the perfect mindfulness (*sammâsati*).

These four establishments are the Buddhist meditation technique well designed by the Buddha as serenity and insight in tandem. When practicing meditation, there are two levels of meditation. They are serenity and insight, which are to be developed, not as two different kinds of meditation, but two levels of meditation. That is Buddhist meditation. One can develop serenity and gain different attainments even the state of neither-perception nor- non-perception. However,

As the Buddha has mentioned in the discourse named the *Great Forty* in *The Middle Length Sayings of the Buddha*, Noble Eightfold Path which consists of eight factors is the path for those who are undergoing the training as trainees (*sekha*) and the path become Tenfold for those who have completed the path as Adept, Enlightened Ones (*asekha*).⁵⁹ This same factor is true to the phrase '*Dasa angehi samannâgato arahâti vuccati*' (The one who is endowed with Tenfold path is called *Arahâ*, the Enlightened One) in the Minor Anthologies.⁶⁰ The Noble Eightfold Path cannot be studied, practiced or developed from anywhere else means within any other faith or philosophy. Only the Buddhas reveal this path. Once Our Buddha himself said, "Of all paths, the Noble Eightfold Path is the best" (*maggânatthagiko settho*).

How to Practice and Develop the 37 Factors of Enlightenment

Following Buddhism means practicing and developing these Thirty-Seven Factors of Enlightenment. These factors, which the Buddha realized, proclaimed, and taught to all of us should be studied, understood, and followed according to his admonition. Then, that will be for the benefit and happiness of many gods and humans. Among these thirty-seven factors what we first come across is the four establishments of mindfulness. As the Buddha said, if one would practice, develop and cultivate these four establishments of mindfulness, that itself is the only way to the attainment of enlightenment, *Nibbâna*. These four establishments are part of the Noble Eightfold Path. They are dealt within the seventh factor of the path as the perfect mindfulness (*sammâsati*).

These four establishments are the Buddhist meditation technique well designed by the Buddha as serenity and insight in tandem. When practicing meditation, there are two levels of meditation. They are serenity and insight, which are to be developed, not as two different kinds of meditation, but two levels of meditation. That is Buddhist meditation. One can develop serenity and gain different attainments even the state of neither-perception nor- non-perception. However,

That is not the purpose of Buddhist meditation. That is not the end of defilement and the end of the *samsâric* journey.

In *The Great Discourse on the Establishment of Mindfulness*, Our Buddha has taught us the method of practicing and developing both serenity and insight together. This discourse is a marvelous discourse delivered by the Buddha illustrating the way of practicing meditation from beginning to the attainment of enlightenment. This discourse was delivered while he was dwelling in the present capital of India, New Delhi. Then, it was called 'Kuru country.' Addressing the monks he said, "Monks, this is the only way for the purification of beings, for the overcoming of sorrow and lamentation, for the disappearance of pain and grief, for reaching the path, and for the attainment of *Nibbâna*. That is the four establishments of mindfulness." In this very *sutta*, at the end Our Buddha clearly said, "If one would practice according to this technique, one would definitely either attain enlightenment or if residue remains would attain the state of non-returner. That was the assurance given by Our Buddha."⁶¹

Therefore, here the Buddha said, 'this is the only way' and then pointed out the only way as the four establishments of mindfulness. What are the four?

1. The contemplation on body as body
2. The contemplation on feelings as feelings
3. The contemplation on mind as mind
4. The contemplation on mental objects as mental objects

If one develops and cultivates these four establishments of mindfulness, he / she simultaneously develops and cultivates the thirty-seven factors of enlightenment as well. The factors, which lead us directly to the attainment of enlightenment, are the thirty-seven factors of enlightenment. These thirty-seven factors of enlightenment could be condensed into the Four Noble Truths, Dependent Origination, and the Three Characteristics of Existence, which are the most significant teachings of Our Buddha. This is exactly like what Venerable *Sâriputta* said in *The Greater Discourse On The*

That is not the purpose of Buddhist meditation. That is not the end of defilement and the end of the *samsâric* journey.

In *The Great Discourse on the Establishment of Mindfulness*, Our Buddha has taught us the method of practicing and developing both serenity and insight together. This discourse is a marvelous discourse delivered by the Buddha illustrating the way of practicing meditation from beginning to the attainment of enlightenment. This discourse was delivered while he was dwelling in the present capital of India, New Delhi. Then, it was called 'Kuru country.' Addressing the monks he said, "Monks, this is the only way for the purification of beings, for the overcoming of sorrow and lamentation, for the disappearance of pain and grief, for reaching the path, and for the attainment of *Nibbâna*. That is the four establishments of mindfulness." In this very *sutta*, at the end Our Buddha clearly said, "If one would practice according to this technique, one would definitely either attain enlightenment or if residue remains would attain the state of non-returner. That was the assurance given by Our Buddha."⁶¹

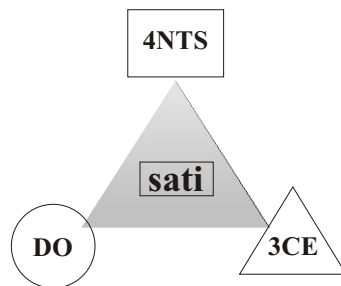
Therefore, here the Buddha said, 'this is the only way' and then pointed out the only way as the four establishments of mindfulness. What are the four?

1. The contemplation on body as body
2. The contemplation on feelings as feelings
3. The contemplation on mind as mind
4. The contemplation on mental objects as mental objects

If one develops and cultivates these four establishments of mindfulness, he / she simultaneously develops and cultivates the thirty-seven factors of enlightenment as well. The factors, which lead us directly to the attainment of enlightenment, are the thirty-seven factors of enlightenment. These thirty-seven factors of enlightenment could be condensed into the Four Noble Truths, Dependent Origination, and the Three Characteristics of Existence, which are the most significant teachings of Our Buddha. This is exactly like what Venerable *Sâriputta* said in *The Greater Discourse On The*

Simile Of The Elephant's Footprints (Mahâ Hatthipadopama Sutta) of *The Middle Length Sayings of the Buddha* referring to the Four Noble Truths. He said, “Friends, just as the footprint of any living being that walks can be placed within an elephant's footprint, and so the elephant's footprint is declared the chief of them because of its great size; so too, all wholesome states can be included in the Four Noble Truths.”⁶² Even the whole teachings of the Buddha could be condensed into one word. That is 'Mindfulness.' Mindfulness is to be established. That is Buddhism. It is the key word, the watchword in Buddhism.

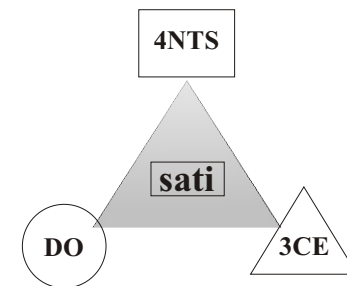
As mentioned above, the three teachings: The Four Noble Truths, Dependent Origination, and the Three Characteristics of Existence are the most significant principles in the teaching of the Buddha. They are like a triangle. When it is compared, the triangle is stronger than other shapes like the rectangle. In a triangle, as all the three angles are equally the same, they are all interdependently existing. The nucleus of the triangle is mindfulness or the four establishment of mindfulness. If one wants to understand this triangle of the teaching of the Buddha, one should study, practice, and develop starting from the nucleus of the triangle i.e. mindfulness or meditation. Without meditation, there is no Buddhism. Being mindful itself is meditation.



When we practice meditation in accordance with the teaching of the Buddha given in “The Great Discourse on the Establishment of Mindfulness,” we can understand and realize the whole teachings of the Buddha. Buddhism means these real teachings of the Buddha. Now, let us understand the real teachings of the Buddha.

Simile Of The Elephant's Footprints (Mahâ Hatthipadopama Sutta) of *The Middle Length Sayings of the Buddha* referring to the Four Noble Truths. He said, “Friends, just as the footprint of any living being that walks can be placed within an elephant's footprint, and so the elephant's footprint is declared the chief of them because of its great size; so too, all wholesome states can be included in the Four Noble Truths.”⁶² Even the whole teachings of the Buddha could be condensed into one word. That is 'Mindfulness.' Mindfulness is to be established. That is Buddhism. It is the key word, the watchword in Buddhism.

As mentioned above, the three teachings: The Four Noble Truths, Dependent Origination, and the Three Characteristics of Existence are the most significant principles in the teaching of the Buddha. They are like a triangle. When it is compared, the triangle is stronger than other shapes like the rectangle. In a triangle, as all the three angles are equally the same, they are all interdependently existing. The nucleus of the triangle is mindfulness or the four establishment of mindfulness. If one wants to understand this triangle, of the teaching of the Buddha, one should study, practice, and develop starting from the nucleus of the triangle i.e. mindfulness or meditation. Without meditation, there is no Buddhism. Being mindful itself is meditation.



When we practice meditation in accordance with the teaching of the Buddha given in “The Great Discourse on the Establishment of Mindfulness,” we can understand and realize the whole teachings of the Buddha. What we call Buddhism means these real teachings of the Buddha. Now, let us understand the real teachings of the Buddha.

The Real Teachings Expounded by the Buddha

Today, there are many different kinds of moss, rust, dust and dross around the real teachings of the Buddha. When all these are removed, the real teachings of the Buddha will shine brightly. Once, Our Supreme Buddha himself said, “Monks, the Dhamma and *Vinaya* taught by the *Tathâgata* [me] would shine only when it is disclosed, but not when it is closed.” (*Tathâgatappavedito bhikkhave Dhamma vinayo vivatova virocati no paticchanno.*)⁶³

When one understands the real teachings of the Buddha, all rust, dust and dross whatsoever will be removed from his or her mind. Then, well established in the teaching of the Buddha, he or she will become a real follower of the Buddha, Dhamma, and the Sangha. Therefore, let us strive and begin with a simple meditation on being mindful in order to understand and practice the four establishments of mindfulness so that we can develop and complete the thirty-seven factors of enlightenment as well. Let us all practice meditation. It is only through meditation that real peace, real happiness, and comfort can be achieved by beings wandering in *samsâra* without understanding the beginning or the end of it.

How the Four Establishments of Mindfulness Lead to the Thirty-Seven Factors of Enlightenment

The most significant and basic factor of practicing the establishment of mindfulness meditation is striving to bring the mind again and again to the object of meditation and maintaining it in the present moment. One should make effort to stop brooding over the past and mulling over the future. Then, one can maintain one's mind in the present moment. Never allow your mind to stray. It is the nature of our mind that it always needs to engage in something. Therefore, give a task to your mind. What is the task to be given to your mind? Ask it to observe your breath, nothing but breath. Give this as

The Real Teachings Expounded by the Buddha

Today, there are many different kinds of moss, rust, dust and dross around the real teachings of the Buddha. When all these are removed, the real teachings of the Buddha will shine brightly. Once, Our Supreme Buddha himself said, “Monks, the Dhamma and *Vinaya* taught by the *Tathâgata* [me] would shine only when it is disclosed, but not when it is closed.” (*Tathâgatappavedito bhikkhave Dhamma vinayo vivatova virocati no paticchanno.*)⁶³

When one understands the real teachings of the Buddha, all rust, dust and dross whatsoever will be removed from his or her mind. Then, well established in the teaching of the Buddha, he or she will become a real follower of the Buddha, Dhamma, and the Sangha. Therefore, let us strive and begin with a simple meditation on being mindful in order to understand and practice the four establishments of mindfulness so that we can develop and complete the thirty-seven factors of enlightenment as well. Let us all practice meditation. It is only through meditation that real peace, real happiness, and comfort can be achieved by beings wandering in *samsâra* without understanding the beginning or the end of it.

How the Four Establishments of Mindfulness Lead to the Thirty-Seven Factors of Enlightenment

The most significant and basic factor of practicing the establishment of mindfulness meditation is striving to bring the mind again and again to the object of meditation and maintaining it in the present moment. One should make effort to stop brooding over the past and mulling over the future. Then, one can maintain one's mind in the present moment. Never allow your mind to stray. It is the nature of our mind that it always needs to engage in something. Therefore, give a task to your mind. What is the task to be given to your mind? Ask it to observe your breath, nothing but breath. Give this as

an order and be in the present moment.

However, though we strive to keep our mind in the present moment, we do not do this to cling to the present moment either. In other words, we should abandon both past and future, but not for the sake of clinging to the present moment. This means the present itself is to be abandoned. That is real detachment. Attachment is one end and repulsion is the other end of a spectrum. Therefore, give up both extremes and then you will end up with detachment because of your mindfulness and clear comprehension of the object of meditation. Real peace, real happiness is found there. Every wise person can do this. Wisdom can only come from within.

Be a wise one and do it. Start now. This is what Our Buddha taught us in the *Dhammapada*.

“Let go of the past, let go of the future, let go of the present, and cross over to the farther shore of existence. With mind wholly liberated, you shall come no more to birth and death.”

*Munca pure munca pacchâto
Majjhe munca bhavassa pâragu,
Sabbattha vimuttamânaso
Na punam jâtijaram upehisi.*⁶⁴

Our Buddha gave this same advice to *Bâhiya* of the bark-cloth who went to the Buddha and repeatedly asked his instruction on the highway while the Buddha was on his way to collect alms from house to house.

Bâhiya was a person from *Suppârake*, South India. While he was sailing, his ship was wrecked. He was washed up naked onto the seashore. Thereafter, he found some tree barks and made himself a garment. People, having seen him, started to worship, revere, and honor him and offered him food, drink, and other requisites considering him an *arahant*. He himself pretended that he was an *arahant*. Oneday, one of his relatives in his previous life, desiring his welfare appeared and said, “You, *Bâhiya*, are neither an *arahant* nor have you entered the path of *arahantship*. You don't even have the practice whereby you would become an *arahant* or enter the path of

an order and be in the present moment.

However, though we strive to keep our mind in the present moment, we do not do this to cling to the present moment either. In other words, we should abandon both past and future, but not for the sake of clinging to the present moment. This means the present itself is to be abandoned. That is real detachment. Attachment is one end and repulsion is the other end of a spectrum. Therefore, give up both extremes and then you will end up with detachment because of your mindfulness and clear comprehension of the object of meditation. Real peace, real happiness is found there. Every wise person can do this. Wisdom can only come from within.

Be a wise one and do it. Start now. This is what Our Buddha taught us in the *Dhammapada*.

“Let go of the past, let go of the future, let go of the present, and cross over to the farther shore of existence. With mind wholly liberated, you shall come no more to birth and death.”

*Munca pure munca pacchâto
Majjhe munca bhavassa pâragu,
Sabbattha vimuttamânaso
Na punam jâtijaram upehisi.*⁶⁴

Our Buddha gave this same advice to *Bâhiya* of the bark-cloth who went to the Buddha and repeatedly asked his instruction on the highway while the Buddha was on his way to collect alms from house to house.

Bâhiya was a person from *Suppârake*, South India. While he was sailing, his ship was wrecked. He was washed up naked onto the seashore. Thereafter, he found some tree barks and made himself a garment. People, having seen him, started to worship, revere, and honor him and offered him food, drink, and other requisites considering him an *arahant*. He himself pretended that he was an *arahant*. Oneday, one of his relatives in his previous life, desiring his welfare appeared and said, “You, *Bâhiya*, are neither an *arahant* nor have you entered the path of *arahantship*. You don't even have the practice whereby you would become an *arahant* or enter the path of

arahantship. "Bâhiya then asked, "Then who, in this world with its *devâs*, are *arahants* or have entered the path to arahantship?" The deity then said, "*Bâhiya*, there is a city in the northern county named *Sâvatthi*. There the Buddha is living now. He truly is an *arahant* and teaches the Dhamma leading to *arahantship*." Then, *Bâhiya* deeply chastened by the deity, left there and in the space of one night went to see the Buddha. When he reached the monastery, the Buddha was on his way to collect alms from house to house. On hearing this, he went to see the Buddha on the highway. He saw the Buddha -serene, inspiring, calm, and equipoised. Having attained the utmost tranquility and poise, He, the great Sage is certainly at peace, tamed, guarded, his senses restrained, a Great One. Seeing the Buddha, he approached him threw himself down with his head at the Buddha's feet, and said, "Teach me the Dhamma Venerable sir. Teach me the Dhamma, O Well-Gone One, that will be for my long-term welfare and happiness. The Buddha then said, "This is not the time, *Bâhiya*, we have entered the town for alms." He then asked for the second time and the third time emphasizing, "It is hard to know for sure what dangers there may be for the Buddha's life, or what dangers there may be for mine. Therefore, teach me the Dhamma!"

Thereupon, having seen his nature, Our Supreme Buddha said, "Bâhiya, you should train yourself thus: In reference to the seen, there will be only the seen. In reference to the heard, only the heard. In reference to the sensed, only the sensed. In reference to the cognized, only the cognized. That is how you should train yourself. When for you there will be only the seen in reference to the seen, only the heard in reference to the heard, only the sensed in reference to the sensed, only the cognized in reference to the cognized, then, *Bâhiya*, there is no you in connection with that. When there is no you in connection with that, there is no you there. When there is no you there, you are neither here nor yonder nor between the two. This, just this, is the end of *dukkha*."

That was the only teaching that the Buddha gave him. Having heard this, on the spot, all of *Bâhiya's* cankers ceased

arahantship. "Bâhiya then asked, "Then who, in this world with its *devâs*, are *arahants* or have entered the path to arahantship?" The deity then said, "*Bâhiya*, there is a city in the northern county named *Sâvatthi*. There the Buddha is living now. He truly is an *arahant* and teaches the Dhamma leading to *arahantship*." Then, *Bâhiya* deeply chastened by the deity, left there and in the space of one night went to see the Buddha. When he reached the monastery, the Buddha was on his way to collect alms from house to house. On hearing this, he went to see the Buddha on the highway. He saw the Buddha -serene, inspiring, calm, and equipoised. Having attained the utmost tranquility and poise, He, the great Sage is certainly at peace, tamed, guarded, his senses restrained, a Great One. Seeing the Buddha, he approached him threw himself down with his head at the Buddha's feet, and said, "Teach me the Dhamma Venerable sir. Teach me the Dhamma, O Well-Gone One, that will be for my long-term welfare and happiness. The Buddha then said, "This is not the time, *Bâhiya*, we have entered the town for alms." He then asked for the second time and the third time emphasizing, "It is hard to know for sure what dangers there may be for the Buddha's life, or what dangers there may be for mine. Therefore, teach me the Dhamma!"

Thereupon, having seen his nature, Our Supreme Buddha said, "Bâhiya, you should train yourself thus: In reference to the seen, there will be only the seen. In reference to the heard, only the heard. In reference to the sensed, only the sensed. In reference to the cognized, only the cognized. That is how you should train yourself. When for you there will be only the seen in reference to the seen, only the heard in reference to the heard, only the sensed in reference to the sensed, only the cognized in reference to the cognized, then, *Bâhiya*, there is no you in connection with that. When there is no you in connection with that, there is no you there. When there is no you there, you are neither here nor yonder nor between the two. This, just this, is the end of *dukkha*."

That was the only teaching that the Buddha gave him. Having heard this, on the spot, all of *Bâhiya's* cankers ceased

and his mind was released from all defilement and became free from all taints. Thus he became one of the *arahants* in the world. Our Buddha, having admonished him, continued his alms round. At this time, a cow with a newborn calf approached and attacked *Bâhiya* who was killed right there. On his way back from his alms round the Buddha saw the dead body of *Bâhiya* and then asked the monks to take his body and cremate it and build a *stupa*, a monument.⁶⁵ The monks did as the Buddha said and then they went to the Buddha and asked about *Bâhiya's* destination. Our Buddha then said, "Monks, *Bâhiya* was a wise person, a person who did not trouble me with questions regarding the Dhamma. He was a quick-witted man and he passed away into *parinibbâna*, not to be born again." That is the greatest benefit of establishing of mindfulness. That is the attainment of *arahantship* and eventually passing away in to *parinibbâna*. In this manner, one should establish the mind neither in the past nor in future, but in the present moment. It is to be understood clearly here that even mind should be established in the present moment, not to grasp anything as 'this is mine,' 'this am I, or 'this is myself,' but to realize things as they really are. This is what is called awareness, mindfulness or the establishment of mindfulness. Mind or attention should be kept with the object in the present moment, present action.

Naturally, what happens in our case is that because of other actions or objects greed, hatred, and delusion arise. This is why we need to fix our mind on our breath. Breath is a neutral object. There is nothing to be grasped in it or repelled from in it. Therefore, this continuous flow of breath is the most convenient object for us to pay our attention to while we are meditating. Breath is always in action from womb to doom. Whenever we observe breath, we simply observe its real nature. In this manner, we cannot establish mind either in the past or in future. Observing the breath is possible only in the present moment. Therefore, it is understood that meditation on the establishment of mindfulness means establishment of mind in the present moment.

When the Buddha explained meditation on the establishment

and his mind was released from all defilement and became free from all taints. Thus he became one of the *arahants* in the world. Our Buddha, having admonished him, continued his alms round. At this time, a cow with a newborn calf approached and attacked *Bâhiya* who was killed right there. On his way back from his alms round the Buddha saw the dead body of *Bâhiya* and then asked the monks to take his body and cremate it and build a *stupa*, a monument.⁶⁵ The monks did as the Buddha said and then they went to the Buddha and asked about *Bâhiya's* destination. Our Buddha then said, "Monks, *Bâhiya* was a wise person, a person who did not trouble me with questions regarding the Dhamma. He was a quick-witted man and he passed away into *parinibbâna*, not to be born again." That is the greatest benefit of establishing of mindfulness. That is the attainment of *arahantship* and eventually passing away in to *parinibbâna*. In this manner, one should establish the mind neither in the past nor in future, but in the present moment. It is to be understood clearly here that even mind should be established in the present moment, not to grasp anything as 'this is mine,' 'this am I, or 'this is myself,' but to realize things as they really are. This is what is called awareness, mindfulness or the establishment of mindfulness. Mind or attention should be kept with the object in the present moment, present action.

Naturally, what happens in our case is that because of other actions or objects greed, hatred, and delusion arise. This is why we need to fix our mind on our breath. Breath is a neutral object. There is nothing to be grasped in it or repelled from in it. Therefore, this continuous flow of breath is the most convenient object for us to pay our attention to while we are meditating. Breath is always in action from womb to doom. Whenever we observe breath, we simply observe its real nature. In this manner, we cannot establish mind either in the past or in future. Observing the breath is possible only in the present moment. Therefore, it is understood that meditation on the establishment of mindfulness means establishment of mind in the present moment.

When the Buddha explained meditation on the establishment

of mindfulness, he recommended mindfulness of breathing first. Here you are expected to observe clearly your own breath. You are supposed to give your full attention, undivided attention to your breath and observe all changes in your breath and know and see it well in its real nature. Breath is your internal body. Observe it well to calm your body and mind. This itself is the way to restrain your senses as well. This is how one should start the meditation on the establishment of mindfulness. This is also called arousal, instigation of energy or striving. There are three ways of arousing energy or making effort. They are instigation of energy, persistence, and exertion in applying energy. (*ârabbhadhâtu, nikkamadhâtu, parakkamadhâtu*).

The effort that is to be made primarily is called arousal or instigation. The continuation of the same energy or effort is persistence, and the energy through which one achieves the goal, as the fruition of persistent effort is the exertion in applying energy. In meditation, the practitioner should practice these qualities one by one. Should I remind you how Our Buddha kept a firm determination and made irreversible energy to practice until he attained the supreme enlightenment under the Bodhi Tree? That determination, energy, or effort is really necessary for each and every practitioner for the successful practice of meditation. Nothing can be gained without effort, energy.

Of the thirty-seven factors of enlightenment, the second category is the four kinds of Right Effort. Arousing these four kinds of effort itself is meditation. As mentioned earlier, nothing can be achieved without effort. The Buddha said, “*Viriya dukkham acceti*” which means it is through effort that one gets over *dukkha*. Therefore, these four kinds of effort are indispensable factors for meditation. They are:

1. Effort to prevent un-arisen evil unwholesome states of mind.
2. Effort to abandon evil unwholesome states of mind that have already arisen.
3. Effort to develop wholesome mental states that have not yet arisen.

of mindfulness, he recommended mindfulness of breathing first. Here you are expected to observe clearly your own breath. You are supposed to give your full attention, undivided attention to your breath and observe all changes in your breath and know and see it well in its real nature. Breath is your internal body. Observe it well to calm your body and mind. This itself is the way to restrain your senses as well. This is how one should start the meditation on the establishment of mindfulness. This is also called arousal, instigation of energy or striving. There are three ways of arousing energy or making effort. They are instigation of energy, persistence, and exertion in applying energy. (*ârabbhadhâtu, nikkamadhâtu, parakkamadhâtu*).

The effort that is to be made primarily is called arousal or instigation. The continuation of the same energy or effort is persistence, and the energy through which one achieves the goal, as the fruition of persistent effort is the exertion in applying energy. In meditation, the practitioner should practice these qualities one by one. Should I remind you how Our Buddha kept a firm determination and made irreversible energy to practice until he attained the supreme enlightenment under the Bodhi Tree? That determination, energy, or effort is really necessary for each and every practitioner for the successful practice of meditation. Nothing can be gained without effort, energy.

Of the thirty-seven factors of enlightenment, the second category is the four kinds of Right Effort. Arousing these four kinds of effort itself is meditation. As mentioned earlier, nothing can be achieved without effort. The Buddha said, “*Viriya dukkham acceti*” which means it is through effort that one gets over *dukkha*. Therefore, these four kinds of effort are indispensable factors for meditation. They are:

1. Effort to prevent un-arisen evil unwholesome states of mind.
2. Effort to abandon evil unwholesome states of mind that have already arisen.
3. Effort to develop wholesome mental states that have not yet arisen.

4. Effort to maintain and perfect wholesome mental states already arisen.

This effort has been recommended by the Buddha in the *Great Discourse on the Establishment of Mindfulness* as 'âtâpi.' That is the effort the practitioners should make to burn out or destroy defilements. Therefore, these four are the factors to be developed and cultivated by us whenever we practice meditation. We should understand unwholesome mental states of mind and then should not allow them to persist. By the same token, whatever unwholesome mental states have already arisen, it should be repeatedly reflected upon, understood, and abandoned all without any hesitation. Whatever wholesome mental states arise, it must be developed and cultivated and made much of in order to maintain those wholesome mental states.

In this manner, when wholesome mental states are developed and cultivated, our mind becomes calm, light, collected, purified, and more and more peaceful. This is the development of mindfulness or the establishment of mindfulness.

Removal of unwholesome mental states and developing wholesome mental states itself is meditation. Recalling the qualities of the Buddha, the Dhamma, and the Sangha, and arousing and suffusing all beings with *metta* is supportive of developing positive mental states, restraining negative mental states, and bringing mental relief. Therefore, especially for the beginners, practicing this recollection of the qualities of the Triple Gem, as well as extending *mettâ*, is certainly helpful to develop and cultivate confidence, which is an indispensable factor for the success of meditation and the correct understanding of the teaching of the Buddha.

While one is engaged in these teachings of meditation as serenity meditation, if his / her mind would come to the state of complete tranquility, serenity or concentration, one would be able to develop four *jhâna* and as a result gain different kinds of knowledge, such as miraculous power, divine ear, ability to recollect previous lives, and divine eye. In order to

4. Effort to maintain and perfect wholesome mental states already arisen.

This effort has been recommended by the Buddha in the *Great Discourse on the Establishment of Mindfulness* as 'âtâpi.' That is the effort the practitioners should make to burn out or destroy defilements. Therefore, these four are the factors to be developed and cultivated by us whenever we practice meditation. We should understand unwholesome mental states of mind and then should not allow them to persist. By the same token, whatever unwholesome mental states have already arisen, it should be repeatedly reflected upon, understood, and abandoned all without any hesitation. Whatever wholesome mental states arise, it must be developed and cultivated and made much of in order to maintain those wholesome mental states.

In this manner, when wholesome mental states are developed and cultivated, our mind becomes calm, light, collected, purified, and more and more peaceful. This is the development of mindfulness or the establishment of mindfulness.

Removal of unwholesome mental states and developing wholesome mental states itself is meditation. Recalling the qualities of the Buddha, the Dhamma, and the Sangha, and arousing and suffusing all beings with *metta* is supportive of developing positive mental states, restraining negative mental states, and bringing mental relief. Therefore, especially for the beginners, practicing this recollection of the qualities of the Triple Gem, as well as extending *mettâ*, is certainly helpful to develop and cultivate confidence, which is an indispensable factor for the success of meditation and the correct understanding of the teaching of the Buddha.

While one is engaged in these teachings of meditation as serenity meditation, if his / her mind would come to the state of complete tranquility, serenity or concentration, one would be able to develop four *jhâna* and as a result gain different kinds of knowledge, such as miraculous power, divine ear, ability to recollect previous lives, and divine eye. In order to

develop these different kinds of knowledge, one should develop the bases for spiritual power. The next category we come across in the 37 factors of enlightenment is the bases for power. There are four such bases for power. They are:

1. Intention
2. Energy
3. Consciousness
4. Investigation

According to the *Mahâ Parinibbâna Sutta* (Last Days Of The Buddha) and the *Câpâla Sutta* of *The Connected Discourses of the Buddha*, after his unparalleled service to gods and humans for forty-five years, at the age of eighty, Our Buddha mindfully gave up his will to live any longer at the *Câpâla* Shrine. With this, there was an earthquake. Before he gave up the will to live, Our Buddha addressed the Venerable *Ananda* and said, “Whoever, *Ananda*, has developed, practiced, employed, strengthened, maintained, scrutinized, and brought to perfection the four constituents of psychic power could, if so desired, remain throughout an eon or a bit more.” Here the eon may be the full life span. In the time of the Buddha, the human life span was 120 years.

Even though Our Buddha said so, Venerable *Ananda* was not conscious enough to invite the Buddha to live the full life span. According to the discourses, it so happened because at that time he was possessed by *Mâra*. However, in this scenario, what is more important for us is the statement of the Buddha.

According to the discourse on the *Far Shore in The Connected Discourses of the Buddha*,⁶⁶ the Buddha explained how to develop the four bases for power. Our Buddha says, “*Bhikkhus*, these four bases for spiritual power, when developed and cultivated, lead to going beyond from the near shore to the far shore. What four? Here, *bhikkhus*, a *bhikkhu* develops the basis for spiritual power that possesses concentration due to **desire** and volitional formations of striving. He develops the basis for spiritual power that possesses concentration due to **energy** and volitional

develop these different kinds of knowledge, one should develop the bases for spiritual power. The next category we come across in the 37 factors of enlightenment is the bases for power. There are four such bases for power. They are:

1. Intention
2. Energy
3. Consciousness
4. Investigation

According to the *Mahâ Parinibbâna Sutta* (Last Days Of The Buddha) and the *Câpâla Sutta* of *The Connected Discourses of the Buddha*, after his unparalleled service to gods and humans for forty-five years, at the age of eighty, Our Buddha mindfully gave up his will to live any longer at the *Câpâla* Shrine. With this, there was an earthquake. Before he gave up the will to live, Our Buddha addressed the Venerable *Ananda* and said, “Whoever, *Ananda*, has developed, practiced, employed, strengthened, maintained, scrutinized, and brought to perfection the four constituents of psychic power could, if so desired, remain throughout an eon or a bit more.” Here the eon may be the full life span. In the time of the Buddha, the human life span was 120 years.

Even though Our Buddha said so, Venerable *Ananda* was not conscious enough to invite the Buddha to live the full life span. According to the discourses, it so happened because at that time he was possessed by *Mâra*. However, in this scenario, what is more important for us is the statement of the Buddha.

According to the discourse on the *Far Shore in The Connected Discourses of the Buddha*,⁶⁶ the Buddha explained how to develop the four bases for power. Our Buddha says, “*Bhikkhus*, these four bases for spiritual power, when developed and cultivated, lead to going beyond from the near shore to the far shore. What four? Here, *bhikkhus*, a *bhikkhu* develops the basis for spiritual power that possesses concentration due to **desire** and volitional formations of striving. He develops the basis for spiritual power that possesses concentration due to **energy** and volitional

formations of striving. He develops the basis for spiritual power that possesses concentration due to **mind** and volitional formations of striving. He develops the basis for spiritual power that possesses concentration due to **investigation** and volitional formations of striving. These four bases for spiritual power, when developed and cultivated, lead to going beyond from the near shore to the far shore.”⁶⁷

When practicing and developing the four bases for spiritual power, one should not be biased. There are four types of bias as well. They are:

1. Desire
2. Hatred
3. Fear
4. Delusion

When the practitioner is practicing in this manner, he or she can develop mind and gain the fourth *jhâna*. The fourth *jhâna* is called “*chanda-samâdhi*” meaning concentration due to desire. Likewise, the other three are also can be named respectively as concentration due to energy, concentration due to mind, and concentration due to investigation. In order to gain these, effort or striving is a must. When practiced with desire as a concentration, effort and thought that itself becomes a foundation and eventually can gain a power. Mind here means a thought to gain a power. However, mere thought is not enough to gain a power. For that purpose, effort must be made. That is actually determination. Having developed mind and concentration, one can gain four *jhânas* and the powers respectively.

Investigation here means giving attention in order to understand clearly mindfulness and clear comprehension. Both these are extremely important for the gaining of right concentration. Those who gain wrong concentration, do wrong things using their powers. Mindfulness and clear comprehension are necessary to use such powers properly. The best example of one who misused *jhâna* was *Devadatta*. It was because of lack of mindfulness and clear

formations of striving. He develops the basis for spiritual power that possesses concentration due to **mind** and volitional formations of striving. He develops the basis for spiritual power that possesses concentration due to **investigation** and volitional formations of striving. These four bases for spiritual power, when developed and cultivated, lead to going beyond from the near shore to the far shore.”⁶⁷

When practicing and developing the four bases for spiritual power, one should not be biased. There are four types of bias as well. They are:

1. Desire
2. Hatred
3. Fear
4. Delusion

When the practitioner is practicing in this manner, he or she can develop mind and gain the fourth *jhâna*. The fourth *jhâna* is called “*chanda-samâdhi*” meaning concentration due to desire. Likewise, the other three are also can be named respectively as concentration due to energy, concentration due to mind, and concentration due to investigation. In order to gain these, effort or striving is a must. When practiced with desire as a concentration, effort and thought that itself becomes a foundation and eventually can gain a power. Mind here means a thought to gain a power. However, mere thought is not enough to gain a power. For that purpose, effort must be made. That is actually determination. Having developed mind and concentration, one can gain four *jhânas* and the powers respectively.

Investigation here means giving attention in order to understand clearly mindfulness and clear comprehension. Both these are extremely important for the gaining of right concentration. Those who gain wrong concentration, do wrong things using their powers. Mindfulness and clear comprehension are necessary to use such powers properly. The best example of one who misused *jhâna* was *Devadatta*. It was because of lack of mindfulness and clear

comprehension that he misused *jhâna* and finally, it led him to his own destruction.

The one who practices and develops the four bases for spiritual powers in this manner, could cross from the near shore to the far shore. This means from *samsâra* to *Nibbâna*.

According to the discourse *Neglected* in *The Connected Discourses of the Buddha*, Our Buddha clearly pointed out that those who have neglected the four bases for spiritual power, have neglected the Noble Path leading to the complete destruction of suffering and those who have undertaken the four bases for spiritual power, have undertaken the Noble Path leading to the complete destruction of suffering.

In the *Revulsion* discourse in the same chapter on the bases for spiritual power in *The Connected Discourses of the Buddha*, Our Buddha says, “*Bhikkhus*, these four bases for spiritual power when developed and cultivated lead to utter revulsion, to dispassion, to cessation, to peace, to direct knowledge, to enlightenment and to *Nibbâna*.”⁶⁸ Likewise, in the *sutta* named *In Part* in the same chapter, the Buddha says, “*Bhikkhus*, whatever ascetics or *brahmins* in the past generated spiritual power in part, all did so because they had developed and cultivated the four bases for spiritual power. Whatever ascetics or *brahmins* in the future will generate spiritual power in part, all will do so because they will develop and cultivate the four bases of spiritual power. Whatever ascetics or *brahmins* generate spiritual power in part now, all do so because they develop and cultivate the four bases for spiritual power.”⁶⁹ The next discourse⁷⁰ gives its complete development, the Buddha saying, “*Bhikkhus*, whatever ascetics or *brahmins* in the past generated spiritual power completely, all did so because they had developed and cultivated the four bases for spiritual power...”

As the result of arousing, developing, and cultivating those four bases for spiritual power, one can gain not only the kinds of worldly knowledge like miraculous power, divine eye, divine ear, but can also gain the unworldly knowledge of the complete eradication of all defilement. Then, one can achieve

comprehension that he misused *jhâna* and finally, it led him to his own destruction.

The one who practices and develops the four bases for spiritual powers in this manner, could cross from the near shore to the far shore. This means from *samsâra* to *Nibbâna*.

According to the discourse *Neglected* in *The Connected Discourses of the Buddha*, Our Buddha clearly pointed out that those who have neglected the four bases for spiritual power, have neglected the Noble Path leading to the complete destruction of suffering and those who have undertaken the four bases for spiritual power, have undertaken the Noble Path leading to the complete destruction of suffering.

In the *Revulsion* discourse in the same chapter on the bases for spiritual power in *The Connected Discourses of the Buddha*, Our Buddha says, “*Bhikkhus*, these four bases for spiritual power when developed and cultivated lead to utter revulsion, to dispassion, to cessation, to peace, to direct knowledge, to enlightenment and to *Nibbâna*.”⁶⁸ Likewise, in the *sutta* named *In Part* in the same chapter, the Buddha says, “*Bhikkhus*, whatever ascetics or *brahmins* in the past generated spiritual power in part, all did so because they had developed and cultivated the four bases for spiritual power. Whatever ascetics or *brahmins* in the future will generate spiritual power in part, all will do so because they will develop and cultivate the four bases of spiritual power. Whatever ascetics or *brahmins* generate spiritual power in part now, all do so because they develop and cultivate the four bases for spiritual power.”⁶⁹ The next discourse⁷⁰ gives its complete development, the Buddha saying, “*Bhikkhus*, whatever ascetics or *brahmins* in the past generated spiritual power completely, all did so because they had developed and cultivated the four bases for spiritual power...”

As the result of arousing, developing, and cultivating those four bases for spiritual power, one can gain not only the kinds of worldly knowledge like miraculous power, divine eye, divine ear, but can also gain the unworldly knowledge of the complete eradication of all defilement. Then, one can achieve

success of gaining liberation from both as the liberation of mind and the liberation by wisdom (*cetovimutta and paññâvimutta*).⁷¹ In order to understand these four strivings and how they are helpful for the realization of Dhamma and the attainment of *Nibbâna*, let us now give attention to the following conversation between Venerable *Ananda* and a *brahmin* named *Unnâbha*.

Once while Venerable *Ananda* was dwelling at *Kosambi* in *Ghosita's* Park, the *brahmin Unnâbha* approached the Venerable *Ananda* and exchanged greetings with him. After their greetings and cordial talk, he sat down to one side and said to the Venerable *Ananda*, “For what purpose, Master *Ananda*, is the holy life lived under the ascetic *Gotama*?”

Then, Venerable *Ananda* said, “It is for the sake of abandoning desire, *brahmin*, that the holy life is lived under the Blessed One.”

“But, Master *Ananda*, is there a path, is there a way for the abandoning of this desire?”

“There is a path, *brahmin*, there is a way for the abandoning of this desire.”

“But, Master *Ananda*, what is the path, what is the way for the abandoning of this desire?”

“Here, *brahmin*, a *bhikkhu* develops the basis for spiritual power that possesses concentration due to desire and volitional formations of striving. He develops the basis for spiritual power that possesses concentration due to energy ... concentration due to mind ... concentration due to investigation and volitional formations of striving. This, *brahmin*, is the path, this is the way for the abandoning of this desire.”

“Such being the case, Master *Ananda*, the situation is interminable, not terminable. It is impossible that one can abandon desire by means of desire itself.”

“Well then, *brahmin*, I will question you about this matter. Answer as you see fit. What do you think, *brahmin*, did you

success of gaining liberation from both as the liberation of mind and the liberation by wisdom (*cetovimutta and paññâvimutta*).⁷¹ In order to understand these four strivings and how they are helpful for the realization of Dhamma and the attainment of *Nibbâna*, let us now give attention to the following conversation between Venerable *Ananda* and a *brahmin* named *Unnâbha*.

Once while Venerable *Ananda* was dwelling at *Kosambi* in *Ghosita's* Park, the *brahmin Unnâbha* approached the Venerable *Ananda* and exchanged greetings with him. After their greetings and cordial talk, he sat down to one side and said to the Venerable *Ananda*, “For what purpose, Master *Ananda*, is the holy life lived under the ascetic *Gotama*?”

Then, Venerable *Ananda* said, “It is for the sake of abandoning desire, *brahmin*, that the holy life is lived under the Blessed One.”

“But, Master *Ananda*, is there a path, is there a way for the abandoning of this desire?”

“There is a path, *brahmin*, there is a way for the abandoning of this desire.”

“But, Master *Ananda*, what is the path, what is the way for the abandoning of this desire?”

“Here, *brahmin*, a *bhikkhu* develops the basis for spiritual power that possesses concentration due to desire and volitional formations of striving. He develops the basis for spiritual power that possesses concentration due to energy ... concentration due to mind ... concentration due to investigation and volitional formations of striving. This, *brahmin*, is the path, this is the way for the abandoning of this desire.”

“Such being the case, Master *Ananda*, the situation is interminable, not terminable. It is impossible that one can abandon desire by means of desire itself.”

“Well then, *brahmin*, I will question you about this matter. Answer as you see fit. What do you think, *brahmin*, did you

earlier have the desire, 'I will go to the park,' and after you went to the park, did the corresponding desire subside?"

"Yes, sir."

"Did you earlier arouse energy, thinking, 'I will go to the park,' and after you went to the park, did the corresponding energy subside?"

"Yes, sir."

"Did you earlier make up your mind, 'I will go to the park,' and after you went to the park, did the corresponding resolution subside?"

"Yes, sir."

"Did you earlier make an investigation, 'Shall I go to the park?' and after you went to the park, did the corresponding investigation subside?"

"Yes, sir."

"It is exactly the same, *brahmin*, with a *bhikkhu* who is an *arahant*, one whose taints are destroyed, who has lived the holy life, done what had to be done, laid down the burden, reached his own goal, utterly destroyed the fetters of existence, and is completely liberated through final knowledge. He earlier had the desire for the attainment of *arahantship*, and when he attained *arahantship*, the corresponding desire subsided. He earlier had aroused energy for the attainment of *arahantship*, and when he attained *arahantship*, the corresponding energy subsided. He earlier had made up his mind to attain *arahantship*, and when he attained *arahantship*, the corresponding resolution subsided. He earlier made an investigation for the attainment of *arahantship*, and when he attained *arahantship*, the corresponding investigation subsided.

"What do you think, brahmin, such being the case, is the situation terminable or interminable?"

"Surely, Master *Ananda*, such being the case, the situation is terminable, not interminable. Magnificent, Master *Ananda*!...

earlier have the desire, 'I will go to the park,' and after you went to the park, did the corresponding desire subside?"

"Yes, sir."

"Did you earlier arouse energy, thinking, 'I will go to the park,' and after you went to the park, did the corresponding energy subside?"

"Yes, sir."

"Did you earlier make up your mind, 'I will go to the park,' and after you went to the park, did the corresponding resolution subside?"

"Yes, sir."

"Did you earlier make an investigation, 'Shall I go to the park?' and after you went to the park, did the corresponding investigation subside?"

"Yes, sir."

"It is exactly the same, *brahmin*, with a *bhikkhu* who is an *arahant*, one whose taints are destroyed, who has lived the holy life, done what had to be done, laid down the burden, reached his own goal, utterly destroyed the fetters of existence, and is completely liberated through final knowledge. He earlier had the desire for the attainment of *arahantship*, and when he attained *arahantship*, the corresponding desire subsided. He earlier had aroused energy for the attainment of *arahantship*, and when he attained *arahantship*, the corresponding energy subsided. He earlier had made up his mind to attain *arahantship*, and when he attained *arahantship*, the corresponding resolution subsided. He earlier made an investigation for the attainment of *arahantship*, and when he attained *arahantship*, the corresponding investigation subsided.

"What do you think, brahmin, such being the case, is the situation terminable or interminable?"

"Surely, Master *Ananda*, such being the case, the situation is terminable, not interminable. Magnificent, Master *Ananda*!...

From today, let Master *Ananda* remember me as a lay follower who has gone for refuge for life.”⁷²

According to the *sutta* titled *Knowledge*, in this same chapter, the Buddha says that it is because of developing and cultivating these four bases of spiritual power, he gained the Dhamma-eye, knowledge, wisdom, true knowledge (science) and light. Thus, it is clear that developing and cultivating the four bases of spiritual power is itself the way to the attainment of full enlightenment. The Buddha has clearly mentioned this in the *Arahanta Sutta* of the same chapter.⁷³

It is true that it is because of developing and cultivating the four spiritual bases, one can gain both worldly and unworldly powers. This is one method of developing *jhâna* and then switching to gain different kinds of knowledge and heading to the destruction of defilement and attaining *Nibbâna*. However, Our Buddha has pointed out another way in his technique of meditation that was purely and well designed by the Buddha himself. That is called *satipatthâna bhâvana*, or the meditation on the establishment of mindfulness. For this method, one should not develop different kinds of worldly knowledge, but an understanding of both serenity and insight together. According to the assurance given in the discourse on this method, the Buddha says, “Monks, if one would practice this method as given here, one would either attain *arahantship* or if residue remain would become a non-returner.”

The method given in *The Great Discourse on the Establishment of Mindfulness* is a method to practice both serenity and insight together that step by step leads to the achievement of both in tandem. In this particular discourse, Our Buddha taught us how to practice and develop the above-mentioned four establishments of mindfulness.

According to his admonition, one is to be practiced first. That is the contemplation on body as body. To practice this, one has to practice mindfulness of breath. For this purpose, Our Buddha recommends congenial places to practice. They are woods, the foot of a tree, and an empty hut or house. His

From today, let Master *Ananda* remember me as a lay follower who has gone for refuge for life.”⁷²

According to the *sutta* titled *Knowledge*, in this same chapter, the Buddha says that it is because of developing and cultivating these four bases of spiritual power, he gained the Dhamma-eye, knowledge, wisdom, true knowledge (science) and light. Thus, it is clear that developing and cultivating the four bases of spiritual power is itself the way to the attainment of full enlightenment. The Buddha has clearly mentioned this in the *Arahanta Sutta* of the same chapter.⁷³

It is true that it is because of developing and cultivating the four spiritual bases, one can gain both worldly and unworldly powers. This is one method of developing *jhâna* and then switching to gain different kinds of knowledge and heading to the destruction of defilement and attaining *Nibbâna*. However, Our Buddha has pointed out another way in his technique of meditation that was purely and well designed by the Buddha himself. That is called *satipatthâna bhâvana*, or the meditation on the establishment of mindfulness. For this method, one should not develop different kinds of worldly knowledge, but an understanding of both serenity and insight together. According to the assurance given in the discourse on this method, the Buddha says, “Monks, if one would practice this method as given here, one would either attain *arahantship* or if residue remain would become a non-returner.”

The method given in *The Great Discourse on the Establishment of Mindfulness* is a method to practice both serenity and insight together that step by step leads to the achievement of both in tandem. In this particular discourse, Our Buddha taught us how to practice and develop the above-mentioned four establishments of mindfulness.

According to his admonition, one is to be practiced first. That is the contemplation on body as body. To practice this, one has to practice mindfulness of breath. For this purpose, Our Buddha recommends congenial places to practice. They are woods, the foot of a tree, and an empty hut or house. His

instruction is to go to such a place, keep the body erect giving attention to the tip of the nose, to the base of the nostrils, and observe your breath as it really is. The Buddha used the term '*anupassanā*' that means see or observe as it is or accordingly. In accordance with this, the practitioner should not do anything other than just observing his/her breath. No regulating of the breath at all. The only thing to be done is observing the breath knowing it and seeing it as it really is. This is the exact method used by scientists today called 'objective observation.' That is the teaching of the Buddha given in this special discourse on the establishment of mindfulness.

Each and every scientist should do this in order to gain the correct results of his or her experiment. Self-centered observation is always unsuccessful. Since it is self-centered, it promotes 'I', 'my', or 'mine' concepts and then always strives to grasp things as 'this is mine, this I am, this is myself.' That is the way to attachment and that is really the trap of defilement based on craving. That is how one is attached. Where there is attachment, there is revulsion as well. Both attachment and repulsion arise because of delusion. Being deluded, it is easy to grasp things tenaciously either with attachment or push away things with repulsion. Both these are extremes. This vacillation is not meditation.

The technique of meditation taught by Our Buddha is not a self-centered method but one of objective observation. The complete method is given in the *Discourse of the Establishment of Mindfulness*. When one sees things objectively, one can see their real nature. The real nature of things is changing, which is '*anicca*' in the *Pāli* the language of the Buddhist canon. Literally it means impermanence. The Buddha said, "All conditioned things are impermanent. Whatever is impermanent, is unsatisfactory, and without a self." These are called the "Three Characteristics of Existence." These are the three marks of all animate and inanimate things.

This realization should be experienced first. Only then can one realize the true nature of oneself and only then can one

instruction is to go to such a place, keep the body erect giving attention to the tip of the nose, to the base of the nostrils, and observe your breath as it really is. The Buddha used the term '*anupassanā*' that means see or observe as it is or accordingly. In accordance with this, the practitioner should not do anything other than just observing his/her breath. No regulating of the breath at all. The only thing to be done is observing the breath knowing it and seeing it as it really is. This is the exact method used by scientists today called 'objective observation.' That is the teaching of the Buddha given in this special discourse on the establishment of mindfulness.

Each and every scientist should do this in order to gain the correct results of his or her experiment. Self-centered observation is always unsuccessful. Since it is self-centered, it promotes 'I', 'my', or 'mine' concepts and then always strives to grasp things as 'this is mine, this I am, this is myself.' That is the way to attachment and that is really the trap of defilement based on craving. That is how one is attached. Where there is attachment, there is revulsion as well. Both attachment and repulsion arise because of delusion. Being deluded, it is easy to grasp things tenaciously either with attachment or push away things with repulsion. Both these are extremes. This vacillation is not meditation.

The technique of meditation taught by Our Buddha is not a self-centered method but one of objective observation. The complete method is given in the *Discourse of the Establishment of Mindfulness*. When one sees things objectively, one can see their real nature. The real nature of things is changing, which is '*anicca*' in the *Pāli* the language of the Buddhist canon. Literally it means impermanence. The Buddha said, "All conditioned things are impermanent. Whatever is impermanent, is unsatisfactory, and without a self." These are called the "Three Characteristics of Existence." These are the three marks of all animate and inanimate things.

This realization should be experienced first. Only then can one realize the true nature of oneself and only then can one

start to eradicate defilement. The most important thing is eradication of defilement. The Buddha taught us the way to be free from defilement and come to the complete cessation of all *dukkha*, discomfort, and dissatisfaction. For this purpose, the only way, as he said, is the four establishments of mindfulness.

In this discourse, the Buddha recommended four factors to be aroused and maintained within oneself while practicing meditation, keeping the body full of relaxation and calming the mind. Those four factors are as follows:

Ardently: Be more and more energetic, arouse effort to practice meditation and continue it properly.

Clear comprehension: Clearly understanding what is going on in the meditation object. The *Pâli* term is '*sampajânâti*' which literally means know it very well. What is to be known very well? One's meditation object is to be known. It is to be understood moment by moment. This constant comprehension leads one to see things as they really are. That is why clearly comprehending is so important.

Mindfully: This is to be aware of what is going on. Mindfulness and alertness both are to be applied here. There is no meditation without mindfulness. The two features, mindfulness and clear comprehension, should go hand-in-hand. With this combination one's meditation becomes a successful one.

Equanimity: Having removed covetousness and grief for the world. Here both covetousness and grief are extremes. When the practitioner abandons both these, his or her meditation will be successful. Covetousness ends up with attachment and grief with repulsion. That is why one should abandon both. Once you abandoned both, you are approaching the state of equanimity. That is the mentality one should maintain while meditating. Equanimity leads one to higher states of mind and one can understand the Four Noble Truths only through a higher level of equanimity. In the practice of *jhâna*, the end of the fourth *jhâna* is full of mindfulness and

start to eradicate defilement. The most important thing is eradication of defilement. The Buddha taught us the way to be free from defilement and come to the complete cessation of all *dukkha*, discomfort, and dissatisfaction. For this purpose, the only way, as he said, is the four establishments of mindfulness.

In this discourse, the Buddha recommended four factors to be aroused and maintained within oneself while practicing meditation, keeping the body full of relaxation and calming the mind. Those four factors are as follows:

Ardently: Be more and more energetic, arouse effort to practice meditation and continue it properly.

Clear comprehension: Clearly understanding what is going on in the meditation object. The *Pâli* term is '*sampajânâti*' which literally means know it very well. What is to be known very well? One's meditation object is to be known. It is to be understood moment by moment. This constant comprehension leads one to see things as they really are. That is why clearly comprehending is so important.

Mindfully: This is to be aware of what is going on. Mindfulness and alertness both are to be applied here. There is no meditation without mindfulness. The two features, mindfulness and clear comprehension, should go hand-in-hand. With this combination one's meditation becomes a successful one.

Equanimity: Having removed covetousness and grief for the world. Here both covetousness and grief are extremes. When the practitioner abandons both these, his or her meditation will be successful. Covetousness ends up with attachment and grief with repulsion. That is why one should abandon both. Once you abandoned both, you are approaching the state of equanimity. That is the mentality one should maintain while meditating. Equanimity leads one to higher states of mind and one can understand the Four Noble Truths only through a higher level of equanimity. In the practice of *jhâna*, the end of the fourth *jhâna* is full of mindfulness and

equanimity. The seventh factor of the enlightenment factors is also equanimity, which leads one to the realization of the four noble truths and attainment of enlightenment.

When one is practicing meditation with these four factors in mind, one can clearly understand what he or she is doing and where he or she is heading. In other words, he or she has good awareness in the present moment. When one is aware of what one is really doing, one does not need many different teachers for instructions. Dhamma will guide oneself. The Dhamma taught by Our Buddha; he is our real teacher. Those who keep Dhamma as the teacher will never get lost. Even Our Buddha's teacher was the Dhamma. Let us not forget that Our Buddha himself said that after his passing away, his Dhamma and *Vinaya* would be our teacher.⁷⁴

When the Buddha taught the four establishments of mindfulness, first he taught about the contemplation on body as body. Let us therefore, now understand how it is to be practiced and developed on one's own.

First of all, we should be well aware that there are two different bodies. They are the breath body and the corporeal body. In other words, they are the physicality and mentality. In the *Discourse on Mindfulness of Breathing*,⁷⁵ the Buddha very clearly mentioned that this breath body is another body. When meditation is practiced and developed in this manner, the practitioner would be able to develop the five faculties and five powers, gradually reaching the attainment of *Nibbâna* by realizing the Four Noble Truths. One should understand the different methods of meditation given in the *Discourse on the Establishment of Mindfulness*. Before we come to understand these different methods, let us strive to understand these five faculties and five powers because in the thirty-seven factors of enlightenment, our next topic is five spiritual faculties and five mental powers.

We introduced the five faculties above. The *Pâli* term for faculty is *indriya*. *Indra* means leader, chief, or something or someone who does something which cannot be done by others. '*Indra*' is a term for the head of gods as well.

equanimity. The seventh factor of the enlightenment factors is also equanimity, which leads one to the realization of the four noble truths and attainment of enlightenment.

When one is practicing meditation with these four factors in mind, one can clearly understand what he or she is doing and where he or she is heading. In other words, he or she has good awareness in the present moment. When one is aware of what one is really doing, one does not need many different teachers for instructions. Dhamma will guide oneself. The Dhamma taught by Our Buddha; he is our real teacher. Those who keep Dhamma as the teacher will never get lost. Even Our Buddha's teacher was the Dhamma. Let us not forget that Our Buddha himself said that after his passing away, his Dhamma and *Vinaya* would be our teacher.⁷⁴

When the Buddha taught the four establishments of mindfulness, first he taught about the contemplation on body as body. Let us therefore, now understand how it is to be practiced and developed on one's own.

First of all, we should be well aware that there are two different bodies. They are the breath body and the corporeal body. In other words, they are the physicality and mentality. In the *Discourse on Mindfulness of Breathing*,⁷⁵ the Buddha very clearly mentioned that this breath body is another body. When meditation is practiced and developed in this manner, the practitioner would be able to develop the five faculties and five powers, gradually reaching the attainment of *Nibbâna* by realizing the Four Noble Truths. One should understand the different methods of meditation given in the *Discourse on the Establishment of Mindfulness*. Before we come to understand these different methods, let us strive to understand these five faculties and five powers because in the thirty-seven factors of enlightenment, our next topic is five spiritual faculties and five mental powers.

We introduced the five faculties above. The *Pâli* term for faculty is *indriya*. *Indra* means leader, chief, or something or someone who does something which cannot be done by others. '*Indra*' is a term for the head of gods as well.

Let us take for instance our eye; our eye is a faculty. What we can do through the eye is see. We cannot do it through any other faculty. The ear is another faculty through which we can hear. Through none of others can we hear. Likewise, the other faculties each have their own unique facility. They are our faculties and they have no peer. Each and everyone is a faculty. Our Buddha has taught clearly in the discourses how to control these faculties. In the *Dhammapada*, the Buddha said, the importance of controlling faculties as follows:

Good is restraint over the eye
Good is restraint over the ear
Good is restraint over the nose
Good is restraint over the tongue
Good is restraint in the body
Good is restraint in speech
Good is restraint in thought
Restraint everywhere is good
The monk restrained in every-way is free from all suffering.

(Dhammapada. Verse 360-361)

There is another wonderful and amazing illustration on this subject of faculties in *The Middle Length Sayings of the Buddha*. That is the *Discourse of Development of Faculties*.⁷⁶

However, in this chapter what we need to examine is not these sense faculties, which are not too difficult to understand. Most people know them and their functions well.

What we examine are five faculties that are to be developed and cultivated by us within, as mental or spiritual faculties. They are:

1. Confidence
2. Energy
3. Mindfulness
4. Concentration
5. Wisdom

Let us take for instance our eye; our eye is a faculty. What we can do through the eye is see. We cannot do it through any other faculty. The ear is another faculty through which we can hear. Through none of others can we hear. Likewise, the other faculties each have their own unique facility. They are our faculties and they have no peer. Each and everyone is a faculty. Our Buddha has taught clearly in the discourses how to control these faculties. In the *Dhammapada*, the Buddha said, the importance of controlling faculties as follows:

Good is restraint over the eye
Good is restraint over the ear
Good is restraint over the nose
Good is restraint over the tongue
Good is restraint in the body
Good is restraint in speech
Good is restraint in thought
Restraint everywhere is good
The monk restrained in every-way is free from all suffering.

(Dhammapada. Verse 360-361)

There is another wonderful and amazing illustration on this subject of faculties in *The Middle Length Sayings of the Buddha*. That is the *Discourse of Development of Faculties*.⁷⁶

However, in this chapter what we need to examine is not these sense faculties, which are not too difficult to understand. Most people know them and their functions well.

What we examine are five faculties that are to be developed and cultivated by us within, as mental or spiritual faculties. They are:

1. Confidence
2. Energy
3. Mindfulness
4. Concentration
5. Wisdom

These five are not something that arise in the mind automatically or involuntarily, especially in those who just live heedlessly, unmindfully, and unfavorably. They arise in the minds of those who develop and cultivate their mind with perseverance and firm resolution. This is why they are called spiritual faculties.

1. Confidence

This first factor is of very great significance from the beginning to the end of the holy life. Each and every person who follows the path should develop this factor of confidence. This is an indispensable factor. The *Pāli* term for confidence is '*saddhā*' which has a deeper meaning than the English translation conveys. Conviction, trust, and faith could be used as synonyms. Of the four factors of the stream-enterer, three are dependent on confirmed confidence. They are the confirmed confidence in the Buddha, confirmed confidence in the Dhamma, and confirmed confidence in the Sangha. The Buddha once referred to confidence as a wealth, '*saddhā dhanam*.'

The definition given to *saddhā* is '*saddahati buddhassa bodhim*' which means you believe, accept, or put faith in the Buddha's enlightenment. Hence, when one has faith in the Buddha, it means one is accepting the Buddha's enlightenment.

According to this, when you accept or believe the Buddha's enlightenment you can develop and cultivate your confidence. In other words, your confidence depends on your acceptance of the Buddha's enlightenment. Whenever you accept or put faith in the Buddha, you accept the Dhamma and the Sangha as well.

Saddhā, faith or confidence, according to Buddha is twofold. They are:

1. Baseless faith
2. Faith with wisdom

The Buddha always encouraged his disciples to arouse and develop faith with wisdom. All Buddhists should follow faith

These five are not something that arise in the mind automatically or involuntarily, especially in those who just live heedlessly, unmindfully, and unfavorably. They arise in the minds of those who develop and cultivate their mind with perseverance and firm resolution. This is why they are called spiritual faculties.

1. Confidence

This first factor is of very great significance from the beginning to the end of the holy life. Each and every person who follows the path should develop this factor of confidence. This is an indispensable factor. The *Pāli* term for confidence is '*saddhā*' which has a deeper meaning than the English translation conveys. Conviction, trust, and faith could be used as synonyms. Of the four factors of the stream-enterer, three are dependent on confirmed confidence. They are the confirmed confidence in the Buddha, confirmed confidence in the Dhamma, and confirmed confidence in the Sangha. The Buddha once referred to confidence as a wealth, '*saddhā dhanam*.'

The definition given to *saddhā* is '*saddahati buddhassa bodhim*' which means you believe, accept, or put faith in the Buddha's enlightenment. Hence, when one has faith in the Buddha, it means one is accepting the Buddha's enlightenment.

According to this, when you accept or believe the Buddha's enlightenment you can develop and cultivate your confidence. In other words, your confidence depends on your acceptance of the Buddha's enlightenment. Whenever you accept or put faith in the Buddha, you accept the Dhamma and the Sangha as well.

Saddhā, faith or confidence, according to Buddha is twofold. They are:

1. Baseless faith
2. Faith with wisdom

The Buddha always encouraged his disciples to arouse and develop faith with wisdom. All Buddhists should follow faith

understanding arises only because of faith with wisdom. It is because of faith with wisdom one enters the path and then gradually treads the path to *Nibbâna*. The person who has entered the path is called the stream-enterer. His or her faith or confidence is confirmed, unwavering confidence (*aveccappasâda*). When one develops and cultivates confidence gradually as a spiritual faculty, that itself becomes a spiritual power. Therefore, each and every individual who wishes to be free from *samsâric* bonds should develop confidence or faith with wisdom.

In the *Dhammapada*, Our Buddha says, “Wisdom never becomes perfect in one whose mind is not steadfast, who knows not the good teaching and whose confidence wavers.”⁷⁷

On many occasions, Our Buddha very clearly explained how the person with confidence comes to the path and treads on the path gradually, systematically. In the discourse With *Canki* in *The Middle Length Sayings of the Buddha*, Our Buddha says that what is more important is investigation first and then confidence or faith arises. He explains, “When he has investigated him [a teacher] and has seen that he is purified from states based on delusion, then he places faith in him; filled with faith he visits him and pays respect to him; having paid respect to him, he gives ear; when he gives ear, he hears the Dhamma; having heard the Dhamma, he memorizes it and examines the meaning of the teachings he has memorized; when he examines their meaning, he gains a reflective acceptance of those teachings; when he has gained a reflective acceptance of those teachings, zeal springs up; when zeal has sprung up, he applies his will; having applied his will, he scrutinizes; having scrutinized, he strives; resolutely striving, he realizes with the body the ultimate truth and sees it by penetrating it with wisdom. In this way, there is the discovery of truth; in this way one discovers truth; in this way we describe the discovery of truth.”⁷⁸

2. Energy

The spiritual faculty of energy is the second. When one has

understanding arises only because of faith with wisdom. It is because of faith with wisdom one enters the path and then gradually treads the path to *Nibbâna*. The person who has entered the path is called the stream-enterer. His or her faith or confidence is confirmed, unwavering confidence (*aveccappasâda*). When one develops and cultivates confidence gradually as a spiritual faculty, that itself becomes a spiritual power. Therefore, each and every individual who wishes to be free from *samsâric* bonds should develop confidence or faith with wisdom.

In the *Dhammapada*, Our Buddha says, “Wisdom never becomes perfect in one whose mind is not steadfast, who knows not the good teaching and whose confidence wavers.”⁷⁷

On many occasions, Our Buddha very clearly explained how the person with confidence comes to the path and treads on the path gradually, systematically. In the discourse With *Canki* in *The Middle Length Sayings of the Buddha*, Our Buddha says that what is more important is investigation first and then confidence or faith arises. He explains, “When he has investigated him [a teacher] and has seen that he is purified from states based on delusion, then he places faith in him; filled with faith he visits him and pays respect to him; having paid respect to him, he gives ear; when he gives ear, he hears the Dhamma; having heard the Dhamma, he memorizes it and examines the meaning of the teachings he has memorized; when he examines their meaning, he gains a reflective acceptance of those teachings; when he has gained a reflective acceptance of those teachings, zeal springs up; when zeal has sprung up, he applies his will; having applied his will, he scrutinizes; having scrutinized, he strives; resolutely striving, he realizes with the body the ultimate truth and sees it by penetrating it with wisdom. In this way, there is the discovery of truth; in this way one discovers truth; in this way we describe the discovery of truth.”⁷⁸

2. Energy

The spiritual faculty of energy is the second. When one has

confidence in the Buddha, Dhamma, and the Sangha, energy arises in him naturally to seek the Dhamma and practice the Dhamma. Energy is striving and encouraging. The effort that you make to perform something is crucial. In the practice of Dhamma what is more important is not physical energy, but mental or spiritual energy. For the success of anything, energy is an indispensable factor. Among all humans, Our Buddha was the most energetic person. You can see, understand and prove this to yourself if you read his discourses (please read *The Great Discourse on Lion's Roar*⁷⁹ and *The Great Discourse to Saccaka*).⁸⁰ His unparalleled striving for the attainment of supreme Buddhahood is certainly amazing, astounding. This supreme enlightenment is the result of practicing, developing, and cultivating mind with dedication and effort not for a short time, but for life after life and eon after eon. Again, for a better understanding of his energetic striving, we recommend that you read the above discourses and also the *To Sangârava Sutta* (No.100) in *The Middle Length Sayings of the Buddha*. When practicing meditation, energy is a must. Our Buddha routed the retinue of Mâra and attained supreme enlightenment because of his unparalleled energy.

As most of us know, *Mahâvîra* is one of the names applied to Our Buddha. *Mahâvîra* means the one with great energy or simply 'great hero.' This was how the deities addressed Our Buddha even before his birth and before humans used it. While he was dwelling in the *Tusita* heaven, the deities went there and invited him to come to be conceived in Maya's womb and to be born in this world to become the Buddha of this era. They said, "Oh great hero, now is the time to be born in the mother's womb." Not only that, there is another epithet for the Buddha: '*Buddhavîra*,' as in the texts we find the phrase "Homage to you, Enlightened Hero who is completely free from all fetters" [*Namo te buddha vîratthu vippamuttosi sabbadhi*].⁸¹

According to the discourse on the *Noble Quest*, after his attainment of enlightenment, when he was a bit reluctant to teach the Dhamma that he rediscovered, the Brahma *Sahampathi* appeared in front of him and said, "Oh virtuous

confidence in the Buddha, Dhamma, and the Sangha, energy arises in him naturally to seek the Dhamma and practice the Dhamma. Energy is striving and encouraging. The effort that you make to perform something is crucial. In the practice of Dhamma what is more important is not physical energy, but mental or spiritual energy. For the success of anything, energy is an indispensable factor. Among all humans, Our Buddha was the most energetic person. You can see, understand and prove this to yourself if you read his discourses (please read *The Great Discourse on Lion's Roar*⁷⁹ and *The Great Discourse to Saccaka*).⁸⁰ His unparalleled striving for the attainment of supreme Buddhahood is certainly amazing, astounding. This supreme enlightenment is the result of practicing, developing, and cultivating mind with dedication and effort not for a short time, but for life after life and eon after eon. Again, for a better understanding of his energetic striving, we recommend that you read the above discourses and also the *To Sangârava Sutta* (No.100) in *The Middle Length Sayings of the Buddha*. When practicing meditation, energy is a must. Our Buddha routed the retinue of Mâra and attained supreme enlightenment because of his unparalleled energy.

As most of us know, *Mahâvîra* is one of the names applied to Our Buddha. *Mahâvîra* means the one with great energy or simply 'great hero.' This was how the deities addressed Our Buddha even before his birth and before humans used it. While he was dwelling in the *Tusita* heaven, the deities went there and invited him to come to be conceived in Maya's womb and to be born in this world to become the Buddha of this era. They said, "Oh great hero, now is the time to be born in the mother's womb." Not only that, there is another epithet for the Buddha: '*Buddhavîra*,' as in the texts we find the phrase "Homage to you, Enlightened Hero who is completely free from all fetters" [*Namo te buddha vîratthu vippamuttosi sabbadhi*].⁸¹

According to the discourse on the *Noble Quest*, after his attainment of enlightenment, when he was a bit reluctant to teach the Dhamma that he rediscovered, the Brahma *Sahampathi* appeared in front of him and said, "Oh virtuous

confidence in the Buddha, Dhamma, and the Sangha, energy arises in him naturally to seek the Dhamma and practice the Dhamma. Energy is striving, encouragement, effort that you make to perform something. In the practice of Dhamma what is more important is not physical energy, but mental or spiritual energy. For the success of anything, energy is an indispensable factor. Among all humans, Our Buddha was the most energetic person. You can see, understand and prove this to yourself if you read his discourses (please read *The Great Discourse on Lion's Roar*⁷⁹ and *The Great Discourse to Saccaka*).⁸⁰ His unparalleled striving for the attainment of supreme Buddhahood is certainly amazing, astounding. This supreme enlightenment is the result of practicing, developing, and cultivating mind with dedication and effort not for a short time, but for life after life and eon after eon. Again, for a better understanding of his energetic striving, we recommend that you read the above discourses and also the *To Sangârava Sutta* (No.100) in *The Middle Length Sayings of the Buddha*. When practicing meditation, energy is a must. Our Buddha routed the retinue of *Mâra* and attained supreme enlightenment because of his unparalleled energy.

As most of us know, *Mahâvîra* is one of the names applied to Our Buddha. *Mahâvîra* means the one with great energy or simply 'great hero.' This was how the deities addressed Our Buddha even before his birth and before humans used it. While he was dwelling in the *Tusita* heaven, the deities went there and invited him to come to be conceived in Maya's womb and to be born in this world to become the Buddha of this era. They said, "Oh great hero, now is the time to be born in the mother's womb." Not only that, there is another epithet for the Buddha: '*Buddhavîra*,' as in the texts we find the phrase "Homage to you, Enlightened Hero who is completely free from all fetters" [*Namo te buddha vîratthu vippamuttosi sabbadhi*].⁸¹

According to the discourse on the *Noble Quest*, after his attainment of enlightenment, when he was a bit reluctant to teach the Dhamma that he rediscovered, the Brahma *Sahampati* appeared in front of him and said, "Oh virtuous

confidence in the Buddha, Dhamma, and the Sangha, energy arises in him naturally to seek the Dhamma and practice the Dhamma. Energy is striving, encouragement, effort that you make to perform something. In the practice of Dhamma what is more important is not physical energy, but mental or spiritual energy. For the success of anything, energy is an indispensable factor. Among all humans, Our Buddha was the most energetic person. You can see, understand and prove this to yourself if you read his discourses (please read *The Great Discourse on Lion's Roar*⁷⁹ and *The Great Discourse to Saccaka*).⁸⁰ His unparalleled striving for the attainment of supreme Buddhahood is certainly amazing, astounding. This supreme enlightenment is the result of practicing, developing, and cultivating mind with dedication and effort not for a short time, but for life after life and eon after eon. Again, for a better understanding of his energetic striving, we recommend that you read the above discourses and also the *To Sangârava Sutta* (No.100) in *The Middle Length Sayings of the Buddha*. When practicing meditation, energy is a must. Our Buddha routed the retinue of *Mâra* and attained supreme enlightenment because of his unparalleled energy.

As most of us know, *Mahâvîra* is one of the names applied to Our Buddha. *Mahâvîra* means the one with great energy or simply 'great hero.' This was how the deities addressed Our Buddha even before his birth and before humans used it. While he was dwelling in the *Tusita* heaven, the deities went there and invited him to come to be conceived in Maya's womb and to be born in this world to become the Buddha of this era. They said, "Oh great hero, now is the time to be born in the mother's womb." Not only that, there is another epithet for the Buddha: '*Buddhavîra*,' as in the texts we find the phrase "Homage to you, Enlightened Hero who is completely free from all fetters" [*Namo te buddha vîratthu vippamuttosi sabbadhi*].⁸¹

According to the discourse on the *Noble Quest*, after his attainment of enlightenment, when he was a bit reluctant to teach the Dhamma that he rediscovered, the Brahma *Sahampati* appeared in front of him and said, "Oh virtuous

austerities. Do not forget that you are a follower of that great master, great hero, the Buddha.

In his discourses, the Buddha very clearly states that though he practiced such severe austerities for six years, he was able and skillful in maintaining unremitting mindfulness continuously. Let us think of these unparalleled virtues of the Buddha and be more and more diligent and practice more and more. Whenever we practice in this manner, we too can develop and cultivate mindfulness day by day. The more we develop mindfulness, the more we become closer and closer to the real peace of *Nibbâna*.

Whenever we are away from Dhamma, we become closer to animals and beasts. The only difference between humans and animals is that humans have Dhamma. Normally taking food, sleeping, fear, and sex are similar in both animals and humans. If humans do not have the Dhamma they are definitely in the realm of animals. There is no medicine equal to the Dhamma. Dhamma is practiced and preserved only when there is mindfulness. Mindfulness basically means living in the present moment.

4. Concentration

Concentration is also something to be developed and cultivated. When properly developed and cultivated, it becomes a spiritual faculty, a spiritual power, a factor of enlightenment and a crucial factor of the Noble Eightfold Path, finally leading to the attainment of *Nibbâna*. There are two kinds of concentration. They are:

1. Wrong concentration
2. Right concentration

Wrong concentration leads us in the wrong direction toward things that are always unbeneficial. What we really need is right concentration. The *Buddhas* lead us to right concentration. While we develop concentration, we develop our wisdom as well. Concentration (*samatha*) is the first level of meditation. When it comes to the perfection, it is called tranquility or serenity (*samâdhi*). Wisdom and *vipassanâ*, or

austerities. Do not forget that you are a follower of that great master, great hero, the Buddha.

In his discourses, the Buddha very clearly states that though he practiced such severe austerities for six years, he was able and skillful in maintaining unremitting mindfulness continuously. Let us think of these unparalleled virtues of the Buddha and be more and more diligent and practice more and more. Whenever we practice in this manner, we too can develop and cultivate mindfulness day by day. The more we develop mindfulness, the more we become closer and closer to the real peace of *Nibbâna*.

Whenever we are away from Dhamma, we become closer to animals and beasts. The only difference between humans and animals is that humans have Dhamma. Normally taking food, sleeping, fear, and sex are similar in both animals and humans. If humans do not have the Dhamma they are definitely in the realm of animals. There is no medicine equal to the Dhamma. Dhamma is practiced and preserved only when there is mindfulness. Mindfulness basically means living in the present moment.

4. Concentration

Concentration is also something to be developed and cultivated. When properly developed and cultivated, it becomes a spiritual faculty, a spiritual power, a factor of enlightenment and a crucial factor of the Noble Eightfold Path, finally leading to the attainment of *Nibbâna*. There are two kinds of concentration. They are:

1. Wrong concentration
2. Right concentration

Wrong concentration leads us in the wrong direction toward things that are always unbeneficial. What we really need is right concentration. The *Buddhas* lead us to right concentration. While we develop concentration, we develop our wisdom as well. Concentration (*samatha*) is the first level of meditation. When it comes to the perfection, it is called tranquility or serenity (*samâdhi*). Wisdom and *vipassanâ*, or

insight, are synonyms. Thus, concentration and wisdom are called serenity and insight (*samatha-vipassanā*). This is the meditation technique that Our Buddha has taught us.

In the discourse on *Concentration* in *The Connected Discourses of the Buddha*, Buddha says, “*Bhikkhus*, develop concentration. A *bhikkhu* who is concentrated understands things as they really are. And what does he understand as it really is? The origin and passing away of form; the origin and passing away of feeling; the origin and passing away of perception; the origin and passing away of volitional formations; the origin and passing away of consciousness.”

Thereafter, Our Buddha taught us how the origin of form, feeling, perception, volitional formations and consciousness takes place. The Buddha says, “And what, *bhikkhus*, is the origin of form? What is the origin of feeling? What is the origin of perception? What is the origin of volitional formations? What is the origin of consciousness?”

“Here, *bhikkhus*, one seeks delight, one welcomes, one remains holding. And what is it that one seeks delight in, what does one welcome, to what does one remain holding? One seeks delight in form, welcomes it, and remains holding to it. As a consequence of this, delight arises. Delight in form is clinging. With one's clinging as condition, existence [comes to be]; with existence as condition, birth; with birth as condition, aging-and-death, sorrow, lamentation, pain, displeasure, and despair come to be. Such is the origin of this whole mass of suffering.

“One seeks delight in feeling ... in perception ... in volitional formations ... in consciousness, welcomes it, and remains holding to it. As a consequence of this, delight arises.... Such is the origin of this whole mass of suffering. This, *bhikkhus*, is the origin of form; this is the origin of feeling; this is the origin of perception; this is the origin of volitional formations; this is the origin of consciousness.”

Then, the Buddha taught us the passing away of the five aggregates. The Buddha said, “And what, *bhikkhus*, is the

insight, are synonyms. Thus, concentration and wisdom are called serenity and insight (*samatha-vipassanā*). This is the meditation technique that Our Buddha has taught us.

In the discourse on *Concentration* in *The Connected Discourses of the Buddha*, Buddha says, “*Bhikkhus*, develop concentration. A *bhikkhu* who is concentrated understands things as they really are. And what does he understand as it really is? The origin and passing away of form; the origin and passing away of feeling; the origin and passing away of perception; the origin and passing away of volitional formations; the origin and passing away of consciousness.”

Thereafter, Our Buddha taught us how the origin of form, feeling, perception, volitional formations and consciousness takes place. The Buddha says, “And what, *bhikkhus*, is the origin of form? What is the origin of feeling? What is the origin of perception? What is the origin of volitional formations? What is the origin of consciousness?”

“Here, *bhikkhus*, one seeks delight, one welcomes, one remains holding. And what is it that one seeks delight in, what does one welcome, to what does one remain holding? One seeks delight in form, welcomes it, and remains holding to it. As a consequence of this, delight arises. Delight in form is clinging. With one's clinging as condition, existence [comes to be]; with existence as condition, birth; with birth as condition, aging-and-death, sorrow, lamentation, pain, displeasure, and despair come to be. Such is the origin of this whole mass of suffering.

“One seeks delight in feeling ... in perception ... in volitional formations ... in consciousness, welcomes it, and remains holding to it. As a consequence of this, delight arises.... Such is the origin of this whole mass of suffering. This, *bhikkhus*, is the origin of form; this is the origin of feeling; this is the origin of perception; this is the origin of volitional formations; this is the origin of consciousness.”

Then, the Buddha taught us the passing away of the five aggregates. The Buddha said, “And what, *bhikkhus*, is the

passing away of form? What is the passing away of feeling? What is the passing away of perception? What is the passing away of volitional formations? What is the passing away of consciousness?

“Here, *bhikkhus*, one does not seek delight, one does not welcome, one does not remain holding. And what is it that one does not seek delight in? What doesn't one welcome? To what doesn't one remain holding? One does not seek delight in form, does not welcome it, does not remain holding to it. As a consequence of this, delight in form ceases. With the cessation of delight comes cessation of clinging; with cessation of clinging, cessation of existence... Such is the cessation of this whole mass of suffering.

“One does not seek delight in feeling... in perception ... in volitional formations ... in consciousness, does not welcome it, does not remain holding to it. As a consequence of this, delight in consciousness ceases... Such is the cessation of this whole mass of suffering.

“This, *bhikkhus*, is the passing away of form; this is the passing away of feeling; this is the passing away of perception; this is the passing away of volitional formations; this is the passing away of consciousness.”⁸³

One who has a concentrated mind(*samādhi*) can understand all these things. Therefore, Our Buddha always emphasizes the need of practicing and developing both serenity and insight. His compassionate admonition is to practice diligently, vigilantly.

It is quite impossible to develop insight without concentration. Therefore, every practitioner should first practice concentration at least for some time. After even for a couple of days one can easily switch to insight. The function of concentration is calming our mind. That is necessary for insight. When one practices concentration, one can subdue one's hindrances. As concentration is developed gradually, systematically for several days, our mind comes to the state of calmness, tranquility and serenity. That calmed and collected

passing away of form? What is the passing away of feeling? What is the passing away of perception? What is the passing away of volitional formations? What is the passing away of consciousness?

“Here, *bhikkhus*, one does not seek delight, one does not welcome, one does not remain holding. And what is it that one does not seek delight in? What doesn't one welcome? To what doesn't one remain holding? One does not seek delight in form, does not welcome it, does not remain holding to it. As a consequence of this, delight in form ceases. With the cessation of delight comes cessation of clinging; with cessation of clinging, cessation of existence... Such is the cessation of this whole mass of suffering.

“One does not seek delight in feeling... in perception ... in volitional formations ... in consciousness, does not welcome it, does not remain holding to it. As a consequence of this, delight in consciousness ceases... Such is the cessation of this whole mass of suffering.

“This, *bhikkhus*, is the passing away of form; this is the passing away of feeling; this is the passing away of perception; this is the passing away of volitional formations; this is the passing away of consciousness.”⁸³

One who has a concentrated mind(*samādhi*) can understand all these things. Therefore, Our Buddha always emphasizes the need of practicing and developing both serenity and insight. His compassionate admonition is to practice diligently, vigilantly.

It is quite impossible to develop insight without concentration. Therefore, every practitioner should first practice concentration at least for some time. After even for a couple of days one can easily switch to insight. The function of concentration is calming our mind. That is necessary for insight. When one practices concentration, one can subdue one's hindrances. As concentration is developed gradually, systematically for several days, our mind comes to the state of calmness, tranquility and serenity. That calmed and collected

mind is a purified mind like pure gold with which one can perform some activities. Our mind, when it comes to that state, it could be directed to *vipassanā* or insight. That is the best thing that one could do with the collected and serene mind. Then, one can see the characteristics of existence namely, impermanent, unsatisfactoriness and soullessness.

Though one could direct one's concentrated mind to develop different kinds of knowledge such as the knowledge of miraculous power, recollecting one's previous lives, reading other's mind, seeing how beings depart here and are born elsewhere, and how beings come from other realms and are born here, and so on, the best thing that one can do is directing the mind to understand *vipassanā*. This is the only way for the attainment of *Nibbāna*. That path is revealed only by the Buddha in the method of meditation in the establishment of mindfulness.

5. Wisdom

The *Pāli* term for wisdom is *paññā* (*pragñā* in Sanskrit). Wisdom in Buddhist context means seeing things as they really are. That is seeing things penetratively, clearly, and precisely. For this purpose, we need two factors. They are mindfulness and clear comprehension. The term that the Buddha has used for clear comprehension is *sampajañña*. In the discourses, most commonly we come across the terms “mindfulness” and “clear comprehension” together. They always go hand in hand. Thus where there are both mindfulness and clear comprehension, there is wisdom as well.

When the practitioner has wisdom, he or she has insight or *vipassanā*. That means understanding the three characteristics of existence. It is through wisdom that one realizes real peace, real happiness of *Nibbāna*. That is the highest result of practicing and developing mindfulness, clear comprehension, and wisdom. Thus the Buddha himself said, “Wisdom is the precious gem of humans,”⁸⁴ “There is no light like wisdom,”⁸⁵ and “Living wisely is the best way of living.”⁸⁶

mind is a purified mind like pure gold with which one can perform some activities. Our mind, when it comes to that state, it could be directed to *vipassanā* or insight. That is the best thing that one could do with the collected and serene mind. Then, one can see the characteristics of existence namely, impermanent, unsatisfactoriness and soullessness.

Though one could direct one's concentrated mind to develop different kinds of knowledge such as the knowledge of miraculous power, recollecting one's previous lives, reading other's mind, seeing how beings depart here and are born elsewhere, and how beings come from other realms and are born here, and so on, the best thing that one can do is directing the mind to understand *vipassanā*. This is the only way for the attainment of *Nibbāna*. That path is revealed only by the Buddha in the method of meditation in the establishment of mindfulness.

5. Wisdom

The *Pāli* term for wisdom is *paññā* (*pragñā* in Sanskrit). Wisdom in Buddhist context means seeing things as they really are. That is seeing things penetratively, clearly, and precisely. For this purpose, we need two factors. They are mindfulness and clear comprehension. The term that the Buddha has used for clear comprehension is *sampajañña*. In the discourses, most commonly we come across the terms “mindfulness” and “clear comprehension” together. They always go hand in hand. Thus where there are both mindfulness and clear comprehension, there is wisdom as well.

When the practitioner has wisdom, he or she has insight or *vipassanā*. That means understanding the three characteristics of existence. It is through wisdom that one realizes real peace, real happiness of *Nibbāna*. That is the highest result of practicing and developing mindfulness, clear comprehension, and wisdom. Thus the Buddha himself said, “Wisdom is the precious gem of humans,”⁸⁴ “There is no light like wisdom,”⁸⁵ and “Living wisely is the best way of living.”⁸⁶

So far, we discussed the five spiritual faculties and five spiritual powers. It is clear that when we develop and cultivate the five spiritual faculties, they themselves become five spiritual powers.

Thus, from the date and the moment that you started your practice of meditation, these faculties and powers have been developed and cultivated by you. One thing of utmost importance to be understood here is that those are not peculiar only to Buddhists. In non-Buddhist traditions too, we can see them. For instance, in accordance with the discourse of the *Noble Quest* and the *Greater Discourse to Saccaka* of *The Middle Length Sayings of the Buddha*, *Alâra Kâlâma* and *Uddaka Râmaputta* also had been practicing these spiritual faculties. That is why the ascetic *Siddhâratha* says, “I considered: Not only *Alâra Kâlâma* has faith, energy, mindfulness, concentration, and wisdom. I too have faith, energy, mindfulness, concentration, and wisdom. Suppose I endeavor to realize the Dhamma that *Alâra Kâlâma* declares he enters upon and abides in by realizing for himself with direct knowledge?”⁸⁷

In the thirty-seven factors of enlightenment, the next topic to be discussed here is the seven factors of enlightenment. When one is practicing and developing these spiritual faculties, they gradually become spiritual powers, then leading to the seven factors of enlightenment. The seven factors of enlightenment are the factors, which lead us for the attainment of *arahantship* or Buddhahood. They are:

- a. Mindfulness
- b. Investigation of the Dhamma
- c. Energy
- d. Rapture
- e. Tranquility
- f. Concentration
- g. Equanimity

When one's equanimity is well developed one can understand what suffering (*dukkha*) really is. At that time, the practitioner's mind is well balanced. That is how it is ready to

So far, we discussed the five spiritual faculties and five spiritual powers. It is clear that when we develop and cultivate the five spiritual faculties, they themselves become five spiritual powers.

Thus, from the date and the moment that you started your practice of meditation, these faculties and powers have been developed and cultivated by you. One thing of utmost importance to be understood here is that those are not peculiar only to Buddhists. In non-Buddhist traditions too, we can see them. For instance, in accordance with the discourse of the *Noble Quest* and the *Greater Discourse to Saccaka* of *The Middle Length Sayings of the Buddha*, *Alâra Kâlâma* and *Uddaka Râmaputta* also had been practicing these spiritual faculties. That is why the ascetic *Siddhâratha* says, “I considered: Not only *Alâra Kâlâma* has faith, energy, mindfulness, concentration, and wisdom. I too have faith, energy, mindfulness, concentration, and wisdom. Suppose I endeavor to realize the Dhamma that *Alâra Kâlâma* declares he enters upon and abides in by realizing for himself with direct knowledge?”⁸⁷

In the thirty-seven factors of enlightenment, the next topic to be discussed here is the seven factors of enlightenment. When one is practicing and developing these spiritual faculties, they gradually become spiritual powers, then leading to the seven factors of enlightenment. The seven factors of enlightenment are the factors, which lead us for the attainment of *arahantship* or Buddhahood. They are:

- a. Mindfulness
- b. Investigation of the Dhamma
- c. Energy
- d. Rapture
- e. Tranquility
- f. Concentration
- g. Equanimity

When one's equanimity is well developed one can understand what suffering (*dukkha*) really is. At that time, the practitioner's mind is well balanced. That is how it is ready to

understand the first truth (*dukkha*) as it really is. If one sees the first truth, one sees the other three as well. Our Buddha says, “*Bhikkhus*, one who sees suffering also sees the origin of suffering, also sees the cessation of suffering, also sees the way leading to the cessation of suffering. One who sees the origin of suffering also sees suffering, also sees the cessation of suffering, also sees the way leading to the cessation of suffering. One who sees the cessation of suffering also sees suffering, also sees the origin of suffering, also sees the way leading to the cessation of suffering. One who sees the way leading to the cessation of suffering also sees suffering, also sees the origin of suffering, also sees the cessation of suffering.”⁸⁸ These Four Noble Truths are interconnected and interrelated. They are not four truths but the four facets of one truth. Thus, the practitioner can realize the Noble Truths.

With this understanding and realization of the Four Noble Truths, the path becomes a tenfold path and he or she becomes one of the enlightened ones in the world with the realization of release and one could pronounce for himself or herself, “It is released.” What is released? Mind is released from all defilements, taints.

Let us now understand both serenity and insight together, in tandem, taught by the Buddha as his well-designed technique of meditation.

understand the first truth (*dukkha*) as it really is. If one sees the first truth, one sees the other three as well. Our Buddha says, “*Bhikkhus*, one who sees suffering also sees the origin of suffering, also sees the cessation of suffering, also sees the way leading to the cessation of suffering. One who sees the origin of suffering also sees suffering, also sees the cessation of suffering, also sees the way leading to the cessation of suffering. One who sees the cessation of suffering also sees suffering, also sees the origin of suffering, also sees the way leading to the cessation of suffering. One who sees the way leading to the cessation of suffering also sees suffering, also sees the origin of suffering, also sees the cessation of suffering.”⁸⁸ These Four Noble Truths are interconnected and interrelated. They are not four truths but the four facets of one truth. Thus, the practitioner can realize the Noble Truths.

With this understanding and realization of the Four Noble Truths, the path becomes a tenfold path and he or she becomes one of the enlightened ones in the world with the realization of release and one could pronounce for himself or herself, “It is released.” What is released? Mind is released from all defilements, taints.

Let us now understand both serenity and insight together, in tandem, taught by the Buddha as his well-designed technique of meditation.

Chapter 4

The Buddha's Technique of Meditation (Serenity and Insight)

(1) Dwelling in Contemplation on Body as Body

What Our Buddha has taught us from the beginning to the end of the *Great Discourse on the Establishment of Mindfulness* is nothing but this tandem meditation. This is popularly known as Serenity and Insight (*samatha* and *vipassana*).

Let us now study how to practice and contemplate on the first section of the discourse. That is contemplation on body as body. Here, in this section, the Buddha very clearly introduced six different methods of meditation. They are:

1. Mindfulness of breath
2. Mindfulness of four postures
3. Mindfulness and clear comprehension
[of all activities]
4. Mindfulness of the parts of the body
5. Mindfulness of the four great elements
6. Mindfulness of nine different stages of a corpse

Mindfulness of Breath

Once Venerable *Ananda* approached the Buddha and said, “Venerable sir, is there one thing which, when developed and cultivated, fulfills four things? And four things which, when developed and cultivated, fulfill seven things? And seven things which, when developed and cultivated, fulfill two things?” Then, Our Buddha said, “There is, *Ananda*, one thing which, when developed and cultivated, fulfills four things; and four things which, when developed and cultivated, fulfill seven things; and seven things which, when developed and cultivated, fulfill two things.” Venerable *Ananda* then asked, “But, venerable sir, what is the one thing which, when developed and cultivated, fulfills four things; and the four things which, when developed and cultivated,

Chapter 4

The Buddha's Technique of Meditation (Serenity and Insight)

(1) Dwelling in Contemplation on Body as Body

What Our Buddha has taught us from the beginning to the end of the *Great Discourse on the Establishment of Mindfulness* is nothing but this tandem meditation. This is popularly known as Serenity and Insight (*samatha* and *vipassana*).

Let us now study how to practice and contemplate on the first section of the discourse. That is contemplation on body as body. Here, in this section, the Buddha very clearly introduced six different methods of meditation. They are:

1. Mindfulness of breath
2. Mindfulness of four postures
3. Mindfulness and clear comprehension
[of all activities]
4. Mindfulness of the parts of the body
5. Mindfulness of the four great elements
6. Mindfulness of nine different stages of a corpse

Mindfulness of Breath

Once Venerable *Ananda* approached the Buddha and said, “Venerable sir, is there one thing which, when developed and cultivated, fulfills four things? And four things which, when developed and cultivated, fulfill seven things? And seven things which, when developed and cultivated, fulfill two things?” Then, Our Buddha said, “There is, *Ananda*, one thing which, when developed and cultivated, fulfills four things; and four things which, when developed and cultivated, fulfill seven things; and seven things which, when developed and cultivated, fulfill two things.” Venerable *Ananda* then asked, “But, venerable sir, what is the one thing which, when developed and cultivated, fulfills four things; and the four things which, when developed and cultivated,

fulfill seven things; and the seven things which, when developed and cultivated, fulfill two things?”

Our Buddha said, “Concentration by mindfulness of breathing, *Ananda*, is the one thing which, when developed and cultivated, fulfills the four establishments of mindfulness. The four establishments of mindfulness, when developed and cultivated, fulfill the seven factors of enlightenment. The seven factors of enlightenment, when developed and cultivated, fulfill true knowledge and liberation.”⁸⁹

Here, let us be humble enough to understand and follow the admonition given by Our Buddha. In order to practice mindfulness of breath, as the Buddha himself said, the first thing is finding a suitable place. Our Buddha has recommended three congenial places. What are those three?

1. Going to a woods (*arañña*)
2. Going to the foot of a tree (*rukkhamûla*)
3. Going to an empty house (*suññâgâra*)

If one can find one of these places, one can successfully practice mindfulness of breathing well.

Thereafter, the Buddha gave us instructions on how to sit for the practice of mindfulness of breathing. One's sitting posture also has great significance for the success of meditation. The Buddha's basic instruction here is to sit cross-legged for this special meditation. However, as we all know, many people cannot sit cross-legged. Here, we have to understand clearly that the Buddha has recommended this cross-legged position only when he explained mindfulness of breathing. This means when practicing mindfulness of breathing for a successful meditation, it is necessary to follow this instruction. Cross-legged means again, not only full lotus position. One can sit either one of the three major positions.

They are:

1. Full lotus
2. Half lotus
3. Easy posture

fulfill seven things; and the seven things which, when developed and cultivated, fulfill two things?”

Our Buddha said, “Concentration by mindfulness of breathing, *Ananda*, is the one thing which, when developed and cultivated, fulfills the four establishments of mindfulness. The four establishments of mindfulness, when developed and cultivated, fulfill the seven factors of enlightenment. The seven factors of enlightenment, when developed and cultivated, fulfill true knowledge and liberation.”⁸⁹

Here, let us be humble enough to understand and follow the admonition given by Our Buddha. In order to practice mindfulness of breath, as the Buddha himself said, the first thing is finding a suitable place. Our Buddha has recommended three congenial places. What are those three?

1. Going to a woods (*arañña*)
2. Going to the foot of a tree (*rukkhamûla*)
3. Going to an empty house (*suññâgâra*)

If one can find one of these places, one can successfully practice mindfulness of breathing well.

Thereafter, the Buddha gave us instructions on how to sit for the practice of mindfulness of breathing. One's sitting posture also has great significance for the success of meditation. The Buddha's basic instruction here is to sit cross-legged for this special meditation. However, as we all know, many people cannot sit cross-legged. Here, we have to understand clearly that the Buddha has recommended this cross-legged position only when he explained mindfulness of breathing. This means when practicing mindfulness of breathing for a successful meditation, it is necessary to follow this instruction. Cross-legged means again, not only full lotus position. One can sit either one of the three major positions.

They are:

1. Full lotus
2. Half lotus
3. Easy posture

Whenever you practice, strive to adapt yourself to one of these postures. Otherwise, you can comfortably sit on a chair or a bench keeping the upper part of the body erect. Keep the spinal column straight. Your head needs to be kept upright. It is even better if you can stay upright without leaning on anything. Now, close your eyes gently and observe your whole body from head to toes and relax your whole body and mind. Keep a calm and quiet mind. Then, with a calm and quiet mind give your full attention to the base of your nostrils and patiently wait for your breath. Whenever you feel your breath, understand your natural breath, and follow your breath. Understand breathing in and breathing out. The Supreme Buddha said, mindfully breathing in, mindfully breathing out. This is the first thing to be done by a practitioner.

The most important thing is this: whenever you practice mindfulness of breathing, never force or regulate your breath. Never control your breath. Buddhist meditation is to be practiced naturally. This is the main difference between Buddhist meditation and non-Buddhist meditation. Why is Buddhist meditation of breath to be practiced naturally, observing natural breath? Because the purpose is understanding and realizing the real nature of breath, eventually the real nature of all things in the world, animate or inanimate.

Again and again, give full attention to your breath and patiently observe its real nature. While you are practicing in this manner, in time you will recognize that you are breathing in long. Then, be more mindful and observe that long breath properly. Whenever you take a long breath in, it will definitely be followed by a long breath out. Then, you will be able to understand breathing in long and breathing out long. Next, even logically, where there is long, there is short. Surely, you will then experience short breath. If you experience a short breath in, then you will experience a short breath out as well. Therefore, our Supreme Buddha said, "Long breath in, long breath out and short breath in, short breath out." One has to understand both long breath and short breath as they really are. That is how one practices

Whenever you practice, strive to adapt yourself to one of these postures. Otherwise, you can comfortably sit on a chair or a bench keeping the upper part of the body erect. Keep the spinal column straight. Your head needs to be kept upright. It is even better if you can stay upright without leaning on anything. Now, close your eyes gently and observe your whole body from head to toes and relax your whole body and mind. Keep a calm and quiet mind. Then, with a calm and quiet mind give your full attention to the base of your nostrils and patiently wait for your breath. Whenever you feel your breath, understand your natural breath, and follow your breath. Understand breathing in and breathing out. The Supreme Buddha said, mindfully breathing in, mindfully breathing out. This is the first thing to be done by a practitioner.

The most important thing is this: whenever you practice mindfulness of breathing, never force or regulate your breath. Never control your breath. Buddhist meditation is to be practiced naturally. This is the main difference between Buddhist meditation and non-Buddhist meditation. Why is Buddhist meditation of breath to be practiced naturally, observing natural breath? Because the purpose is understanding and realizing the real nature of breath, eventually the real nature of all things in the world, animate or inanimate.

Again and again, give full attention to your breath and patiently observe its real nature. While you are practicing in this manner, in time you will recognize that you are breathing in long. Then, be more mindful and observe that long breath properly. Whenever you take a long breath in, it will definitely be followed by a long breath out. Then, you will be able to understand breathing in long and breathing out long. Next, even logically, where there is long, there is short. Surely, you will then experience short breath. If you experience a short breath in, then you will experience a short breath out as well. Therefore, our Supreme Buddha said, "Long breath in, long breath out and short breath in, short breath out." One has to understand both long breath and short breath as they really are. That is how one practices

mindfulness of breathing with right understanding (*sammâditthi*).

The Supreme Buddha's instruction for the four steps of the breath in this discourse:

When you breathe in long, understand well that you are breathing in, and when you breathe out long, understand well that you are breathing out.

When you breathe in short, understand well that you are breathing in short and when you breathe out short understand well that you are breathing out short.

Understand your whole breath body. This means giving full attention to the breath, one should observe the breath from beginning to the end of breath. How the breath starts and then how it flows naturally in the middle and how it comes to the end. Thus, beginning, middle, and the end. When you breathe out, it is also the same. Slowly, as the breath is coming out, understand it from the beginning, and understand the middle of the breath, and finally, when your lungs are emptied, you will realized that you have no more breath in. This is called observing the whole breath body. **Caution:** Your attention should be kept all the time only at the entrance of your nostrils. In other words, you are not supposed to follow your breath through your throat to lungs and/or further down to the belly. Observing the movement of the belly is a different method of meditation.

Understand the in breath and out breath and experience the calming of your breath. (You will notice that your breath is slow and calming down. Do not be scared! Observe and be patient! You will enjoy bliss for sure, with the experience of tranquility of body and mind.)

This is the crossroad. Now at this stage, if your meditation is successful, you will have good concentration and that concentrated mind should be able to switch to insight. Whenever you practice concentration or serenity meditation, you give attention to only one object. That was what you have been practicing so far. Now, you can switch your mind to insight. Give your full attention to your breath and strive to

mindfulness of breathing with right understanding (*sammâditthi*).

The Supreme Buddha's instruction for the four steps of the breath in this discourse:

When you breathe in long, understand well that you are breathing in, and when you breathe out long, understand well that you are breathing out.

When you breathe in short, understand well that you are breathing in short and when you breathe out short understand well that you are breathing out short.

Understand your whole breath body. This means giving full attention to the breath, one should observe the breath from beginning to the end of breath. How the breath starts and then how it flows naturally in the middle and how it comes to the end. Thus, beginning, middle, and the end. When you breathe out, it is also the same. Slowly, as the breath is coming out, understand it from the beginning, and understand the middle of the breath, and finally, when your lungs are emptied, you will realized that you have no more breath in. This is called observing the whole breath body. **Caution:** Your attention should be kept all the time only at the entrance of your nostrils. In other words, you are not supposed to follow your breath through your throat to lungs and/or further down to the belly. Observing the movement of the belly is a different method of meditation.

Understand the in breath and out breath and experience the calming of your breath. (You will notice that your breath is slow and calming down. Do not be scared! Observe and be patient! You will enjoy bliss for sure, with the experience of tranquility of body and mind.)

This is the crossroad. Now at this stage, if your meditation is successful, you will have good concentration and that concentrated mind should be able to switch to insight. Whenever you practice concentration or serenity meditation, you give attention to only one object. That was what you have been practicing so far. Now, you can switch your mind to insight. Give your full attention to your breath and strive to

understand the nature of arising and passing of your breath. At this time, your meditation object is not only one, but as many as possible. This means you are observing all the objects that come to your mind through your six senses. Understand the arising and passing nature of all things. Mainly, observe your internal body [the breath body] and observe your external body [the corporeality]. Even this same experience can be extended as an inference, whenever you think of another person or being as well. Our Supreme Buddha said, “Dwelling contemplating upon the internal body as internal body and external body as external body.” Therefore, whenever you observe something, it is necessary to understanding the changing nature of that object. The Supreme Buddha's instruction here is, “There is nothing to cling to in the world.” Therefore, never cling to anything as mine, me, or myself. Whenever you understand the nature of changing, you understand the nature of impermanence. Whenever you understand the nature of impermanence, you will understand the nature of unsatisfactoriness and soullessness as well. Those three are called the Three Characteristics of Existence or in Pāli *tilakkhana*. The real *vipassanā* means experiencing these three characteristics through wisdom as an experiential wisdom.

In The *Great Discourse on the Establishment of Mindfulness*, in each section on meditation, the Buddha has taught us how to switch our concentrated mind to insight. That is how both serenity and insight are conjoined and how the technique becomes a tandem meditation (*yuganaddha*). The beautiful passage we come across at the end of each method of meditation in this discourse is as follows:

“In this way he abides contemplating the body as a body internally, or he abides contemplating the body as a body externally, or he abides contemplating the body as a body both internally and externally. Or else he abides contemplating in the body its nature of arising, or he abides contemplating in the body its nature of vanishing, or he abides contemplating in the body its nature of both arising and vanishing. Or else mindfulness that 'there is a body' is simply

understand the nature of arising and passing of your breath. At this time, your meditation object is not only one, but as many as possible. This means you are observing all the objects that come to your mind through your six senses. Understand the arising and passing nature of all things. Mainly, observe your internal body [the breath body] and observe your external body [the corporeality]. Even this same experience can be extended as an inference, whenever you think of another person or being as well. Our Supreme Buddha said, “Dwelling contemplating upon the internal body as internal body and external body as external body.” Therefore, whenever you observe something, it is necessary to understanding the changing nature of that object. The Supreme Buddha's instruction here is, “There is nothing to cling to in the world.” Therefore, never cling to anything as mine, me, or myself. Whenever you understand the nature of changing, you understand the nature of impermanence. Whenever you understand the nature of impermanence, you will understand the nature of unsatisfactoriness and soullessness as well. Those three are called the Three Characteristics of Existence or in Pāli *tilakkhana*. The real *vipassanā* means experiencing these three characteristics through wisdom as an experiential wisdom.

In The *Great Discourse on the Establishment of Mindfulness*, in each section on meditation, the Buddha has taught us how to switch our concentrated mind to insight. That is how both serenity and insight are conjoined and how the technique becomes a tandem meditation (*yuganaddha*). The beautiful passage we come across at the end of each method of meditation in this discourse is as follows:

“In this way he abides contemplating the body as a body internally, or he abides contemplating the body as a body externally, or he abides contemplating the body as a body both internally and externally. Or else he abides contemplating in the body its nature of arising, or he abides contemplating in the body its nature of vanishing, or he abides contemplating in the body its nature of both arising and vanishing. Or else mindfulness that 'there is a body' is simply

established in him to the extent necessary for bare knowledge and mindfulness. And he abides independent, not clinging to anything in the world. That is how a *bhikkhu* abides contemplating the body as a body.”⁹⁰ That is how one has to practice, develop, and cultivate the four stages of mindfulness of breathing in accordance with this *sutta*.

Let us practice, develop, and cultivate these four stages so that we can experience this wonderful Dhamma taught by Our Supreme Buddha. If one can practice and develop these four stages, one can achieve a great success in this very life.

Our Supreme Buddha recommended a method of practicing mindfulness of breathing by observing sixteen stages of breath as well in several discourses such as, the *Discourse on Mindfulness of Breathing* and the *Discourse on Mindfulness of the Body* in *The Middle Length Sayings of the Buddha* and the discourses to *Ananda*, and to *Kimbila* in the *Anâpânasati Samyutta* in *The Connected Discourses of the Buddha*.⁹¹

Mindfulness and the Four Postures

Whatever we do, we maintain only four postures. They are:

1. Standing
2. Walking
3. Sitting
4. Lying down

The instruction of Our Buddha here is to be mindful in all four postures. That itself is a meditation. This is the second subsection of the method of contemplation on body as body in this great discourse on the establishment of mindfulness.

How to Maintain Clear Comprehension of All Activities

According to the same discourse, Our Buddha taught seven different ways of mindfulness in regard of clear comprehension. However, one should not limit his or her clear comprehension only to these seven ways. They are the basic actions. Therefore, here the point is to give your full attention or be aware [be mindful] of all your actions and understand them clearly. That is “clear comprehension” or

established in him to the extent necessary for bare knowledge and mindfulness. And he abides independent, not clinging to anything in the world. That is how a *bhikkhu* abides contemplating the body as a body.”⁹⁰ That is how one has to practice, develop, and cultivate the four stages of mindfulness of breathing in accordance with this *sutta*.

Let us practice, develop, and cultivate these four stages so that we can experience this wonderful Dhamma taught by Our Supreme Buddha. If one can practice and develop these four stages, one can achieve a great success in this very life.

Our Supreme Buddha recommended a method of practicing mindfulness of breathing by observing sixteen stages of breath as well in several discourses such as, the *Discourse on Mindfulness of Breathing* and the *Discourse on Mindfulness of the Body* in *The Middle Length Sayings of the Buddha* and the discourses to *Ananda*, and to *Kimbila* in the *Anâpânasati Samyutta* in *The Connected Discourses of the Buddha*.⁹¹

Mindfulness and the Four Postures

Whatever we do, we maintain only four postures. They are:

1. Standing
2. Walking
3. Sitting
4. Lying down

The instruction of Our Buddha here is to be mindful in all four postures. That itself is a meditation. This is the second subsection of the method of contemplation on body as body in this great discourse on the establishment of mindfulness.

How to Maintain Clear Comprehension of All Activities

According to the same discourse, Our Buddha taught seven different ways of mindfulness in regard of clear comprehension. However, one should not limit his or her clear comprehension only to these seven ways. They are the basic actions. Therefore, here the point is to give your full attention or be aware [be mindful] of all your actions and understand them clearly. That is “clear comprehension” or

“full awareness.” The seven ways to be fully aware have been stated by the Buddha as follows:

“Again, *Bhikkhus*, a *bhikkhu* is one who acts in full awareness: (1) when going forward and returning; who acts in full awareness; (2) when looking ahead and looking away; who acts in full awareness; (3) when flexing and extending his limbs; who acts in full awareness; (4) when wearing his robes and carrying his outer robe and bowl; who acts in full awareness; (5) when eating, drinking, consuming food, and tasting; who acts in full awareness; (6) when defecating and urinating; who acts in full awareness (7) when walking, standing, sitting, falling asleep, waking up, talking, and keeping silent.”

Mindfulness of the Thirty-Two Parts of the Body

The Buddha mentally dissected this body into thirty-two parts and instructed us to observe them all and understand the repulsive nature of them and maintain an equanimous mind. What really is expected from the practitioner of this method of meditation is observation of the parts and understanding their nature of impermanence and repulsiveness. When one understands the repulsive nature and impermanent nature of these parts of the body, one can see them as they really are. Then, one can arouse and develop equanimity. Now, let us understand the thirty-two parts of the body first.

The Buddha said, “Again, *bhikkhus*, a *bhikkhu* reviews this same body up from the soles of the feet and down from the top of the hair, bounded by skin, as full of many kinds of impurity thus: In this body, there are (1) head-hairs, (2) body-hairs, (3) nails, (4) teeth, (5) skin, (6) flesh, (7) sinews, (8) bones, (9) bone-marrow, (10) kidneys, (11) heart, (12) liver, (13) diaphragm, (14) spleen, (15) lungs, (16) large intestines, (17) small intestines, (18) contents of the stomach, (19) feces, (20) bile, (21) phlegm, (22) pus, (23) blood, (24) sweat, (25) fat, (26) tears, (27) grease, (28) spittle, (29) snot, (30) oil of the joints, (31) urine, and (32) brain matter.”⁹²

Our Buddha was the master of parables and similes. He says,

“full awareness.” The seven ways to be fully aware have been stated by the Buddha as follows:

“Again, *Bhikkhus*, a *bhikkhu* is one who acts in full awareness: (1) when going forward and returning; who acts in full awareness; (2) when looking ahead and looking away; who acts in full awareness; (3) when flexing and extending his limbs; who acts in full awareness; (4) when wearing his robes and carrying his outer robe and bowl; who acts in full awareness; (5) when eating, drinking, consuming food, and tasting; who acts in full awareness; (6) when defecating and urinating; who acts in full awareness (7) when walking, standing, sitting, falling asleep, waking up, talking, and keeping silent.”

Mindfulness of the Thirty-Two Parts of the Body

The Buddha mentally dissected this body into thirty-two parts and instructed us to observe them all and understand the repulsive nature of them and maintain an equanimous mind. What really is expected from the practitioner of this method of meditation is observation of the parts and understanding their nature of impermanence and repulsiveness. When one understands the repulsive nature and impermanent nature of these parts of the body, one can see them as they really are. Then, one can arouse and develop equanimity. Now, let us understand the thirty-two parts of the body first.

The Buddha said, “Again, *bhikkhus*, a *bhikkhu* reviews this same body up from the soles of the feet and down from the top of the hair, bounded by skin, as full of many kinds of impurity thus: In this body, there are (1) head-hairs, (2) body-hairs, (3) nails, (4) teeth, (5) skin, (6) flesh, (7) sinews, (8) bones, (9) bone-marrow, (10) kidneys, (11) heart, (12) liver, (13) diaphragm, (14) spleen, (15) lungs, (16) large intestines, (17) small intestines, (18) contents of the stomach, (19) feces, (20) bile, (21) phlegm, (22) pus, (23) blood, (24) sweat, (25) fat, (26) tears, (27) grease, (28) spittle, (29) snot, (30) oil of the joints, (31) urine, and (32) brain matter.”⁹²

Our Buddha was the master of parables and similes. He says,

“Monks, just as though there were a bag with an opening at both ends, full of many sorts of grain, such as hill rice, red rice, beans, peas, millet, and white rice, and a man with good eyes were to open it and review it thus: “This is hill rice, this is red rice, these are beans, these are peas, this is millet, this is white rice; so too, a *bhikkhu* reviews this same body as full of many kinds of impurity thus: In this body there are head-hairs ... and urine.”

The simile of the bag given in this discourse is really wonderful. Every right-understanding person can understand this simile and the nature of our own body that we support with various kinds of foods and drinks and adorn with beautiful and colorful clothing. If one really needs to understand reality, one can understand it through this fathom high body itself. As the Buddha said, “The world, the origination of the world, the cessation of the world, and the path leading to the cessation of the world is within this fathom high body with consciousness and perception.”

Mindfulness of Four Great Elements

Next, the Buddha taught us the contemplation on the four elements. All matters are composed of these four great elements:

1. Earth (solidity)
2. Water (liquidity)
3. Air (mobility)
4. Fire (temperature)

When practitioners contemplate these four, they should give full attention to the body and understand the nature of the four elements as they appear in the different parts of the body, mainly referring to the nature of solidity, liquidity, mobility, and temperature. The Buddha gave a simile for this observation as well. He says, “Just as though a skilled butcher or his apprentice had killed a cow and was seated at the crossroads with it cut up into pieces; so too, a *bhikkhu* reviews this same body as consisting of elements thus: “In this body there are the earth element, the water element, the fire element, and the air element.” In order to understand the

“Monks, just as though there were a bag with an opening at both ends, full of many sorts of grain, such as hill rice, red rice, beans, peas, millet, and white rice, and a man with good eyes were to open it and review it thus: “This is hill rice, this is red rice, these are beans, these are peas, this is millet, this is white rice; so too, a *bhikkhu* reviews this same body as full of many kinds of impurity thus: In this body there are head-hairs ... and urine.”

The simile of the bag given in this discourse is really wonderful. Every right-understanding person can understand this simile and the nature of our own body that we support with various kinds of foods and drinks and adorn with beautiful and colorful clothing. If one really needs to understand reality, one can understand it through this fathom high body itself. As the Buddha said, “The world, the origination of the world, the cessation of the world, and the path leading to the cessation of the world is within this fathom high body with consciousness and perception.”

Mindfulness of Four Great Elements

Next, the Buddha taught us the contemplation on the four elements. All matters are composed of these four great elements:

1. Earth (solidity)
2. Water (liquidity)
3. Air (mobility)
4. Fire (temperature)

When practitioners contemplate these four, they should give full attention to the body and understand the nature of the four elements as they appear in the different parts of the body, mainly referring to the nature of solidity, liquidity, mobility, and temperature. The Buddha gave a simile for this observation as well. He says, “Just as though a skilled butcher or his apprentice had killed a cow and was seated at the crossroads with it cut up into pieces; so too, a *bhikkhu* reviews this same body as consisting of elements thus: “In this body there are the earth element, the water element, the fire element, and the air element.” In order to understand the

real nature of the four elements read *The Great Discourse on the Simile of the Elephant's Footprint* in *The Middle Length Sayings of the Buddha*.⁹³

Mindfulness of Different Stages of a Corpse

The Buddha clearly recommended the contemplation and mindfulness of the nine stages of the decomposition of a corpse. When the practitioner visits the charnel ground, he or she should observe it and then compare it with his or her life as "This is what will happen to me also, I am not exempt from this nature!"

Nowadays, we usually do not get this chance because corpses are not disposed of in charnel grounds or elsewhere. However, if we get a rare chance, we can practice this meditation method as well. Since this is quite impractical today, we do not want to put in much time to describe it.

So far, we have described the first of the four establishments of mindfulness. Though we introduced mainly six different method of meditation in this section, the practitioner is not required to practice and develop all these six. Even if one can practice and develop at least one method, one can come to the states of serenity and insight, so choose one of these six and practice in your daily life in order to develop your mind. It definitely will lead to the success of your meditation and success of your spiritual life. Do not forget to practice both types of meditation in tandem.

(2) Dwelling Contemplating on Feelings as Feelings

This is the second establishment of mindfulness. When practicing this method, the practitioner should employ mindfulness of breathing for some time and then switch to observing and understanding feelings as feelings. There are various kinds of feeling in the body. Feeling means not only pains and aches, but also any type of mental or physical sensation. Basically, there are three kinds of feelings. They are:

1. Pleasant feelings

real nature of the four elements read *The Great Discourse on the Simile of the Elephant's Footprint* in *The Middle Length Sayings of the Buddha*.⁹³

Mindfulness of Different Stages of a Corpse

The Buddha clearly recommended the contemplation and mindfulness of the nine stages of the decomposition of a corpse. When the practitioner visits the charnel ground, he or she should observe it and then compare it with his or her life as "This is what will happen to me also, I am not exempt from this nature!"

Nowadays, we usually do not get this chance because corpses are not disposed of in charnel grounds or elsewhere. However, if we get a rare chance, we can practice this meditation method as well. Since this is quite impractical today, we do not want to put in much time to describe it.

So far, we have described the first of the four establishments of mindfulness. Though we introduced mainly six different method of meditation in this section, the practitioner is not required to practice and develop all these six. Even if one can practice and develop at least one method, one can come to the states of serenity and insight, so choose one of these six and practice in your daily life in order to develop your mind. It definitely will lead to the success of your meditation and success of your spiritual life. Do not forget to practice both types of meditation in tandem.

(2) Dwelling Contemplating on Feelings as Feelings

This is the second establishment of mindfulness. When practicing this method, the practitioner should employ mindfulness of breathing for some time and then switch to observing and understanding feelings as feelings. There are various kinds of feeling in the body. Feeling means not only pains and aches, but also any type of mental or physical sensation. Basically, there are three kinds of feelings. They are:

1. Pleasant feelings

2. Painful feelings
3. Neither painful nor pleasant feelings

According to *The Discourse on the Establishment of Mindfulness*, the Buddha has pointed out feelings as worldly feelings and unworldly feelings. They are again, categorized as worldly pleasant feelings, worldly painful feelings, and worldly neither painful nor pleasant feelings. Unworldly feelings are also categorized in the same manner as unworldly pleasant feelings, unworldly painful feelings, and unworldly neither painful nor pleasant feelings. Thus, the Buddha has taught us nine types of feelings in this discourse.

Referring to many kinds of feelings, Our Buddha pointed out that there are 108 kinds of feelings in the discourse on *The Many Kinds of Feeling* in *The Middle Length Sayings of the Buddha*.⁹⁴

The practitioner is expected to understand these different feelings while they are present. Though there are feelings, there is no feeling to be grasped as 'my feeling,' or 'feeling is mine,' or 'feeling I am.' That is to be understood clearly. All feelings are not mine, not me, not myself. All feelings are impermanent, unsatisfactory, and without a self. That is how one should train one's mind to see things as they really are. That is pure *vipassanā*.

Here also, we have to understand that mindfulness of breathing is practiced as concentration and then gradually switch to insight by seeing the nature of the changing and arising and passing of the breath. In this manner, the practitioner practices both serenity and insight in tandem. Both develop together as a conjoined effort to realize true peace, real happiness.

(3) Dwelling Contemplating on Mind as Mind

This is the third establishment of mindfulness. In this section, the practitioner is expected to practice mindfulness of breathing for sometime first, and then observation of different kinds of mental states. When observing mind as mind, one can clearly comprehend various kinds of mental states. When

2. Painful feelings
3. Neither painful nor pleasant feelings

According to *The Discourse on the Establishment of Mindfulness*, the Buddha has pointed out feelings as worldly feelings and unworldly feelings. They are again, categorized as worldly pleasant feelings, worldly painful feelings, and worldly neither painful nor pleasant feelings. Unworldly feelings are also categorized in the same manner as unworldly pleasant feelings, unworldly painful feelings, and unworldly neither painful nor pleasant feelings. Thus, the Buddha has taught us nine types of feelings in this discourse.

Referring to many kinds of feelings, Our Buddha pointed out that there are 108 kinds of feelings in the discourse on *The Many Kinds of Feeling* in *The Middle Length Sayings of the Buddha*.⁹⁴

The practitioner is expected to understand these different feelings while they are present. Though there are feelings, there is no feeling to be grasped as 'my feeling,' or 'feeling is mine,' or 'feeling I am.' That is to be understood clearly. All feelings are not mine, not me, not myself. All feelings are impermanent, unsatisfactory, and without a self. That is how one should train one's mind to see things as they really are. That is pure *vipassanā*.

Here also, we have to understand that mindfulness of breathing is practiced as concentration and then gradually switch to insight by seeing the nature of the changing and arising and passing of the breath. In this manner, the practitioner practices both serenity and insight in tandem. Both develop together as a conjoined effort to realize true peace, real happiness.

(3) Dwelling Contemplating on Mind as Mind

This is the third establishment of mindfulness. In this section, the practitioner is expected to practice mindfulness of breathing for sometime first, and then observation of different kinds of mental states. When observing mind as mind, one can clearly comprehend various kinds of mental states. When

the mind is affected by lust, he understands that it is affected by lust; when it is unaffected by lust he understands that it is unaffected by lust. When it is affected by hate, he understands that it is affected by hate and when it is unaffected by hate, he understands that it is unaffected by hate. When it is affected by delusion, he understands that it is affected by delusion and when it is unaffected by delusion, he understands that it is unaffected by delusion. Whenever the mind is distracted, he understands that it is a distracted mind. Whenever the mind is contracted, he understands that it is contracted. If it is an exalted mind he understands that it is an exalted mind. If it is an un-exalted mind he understands that it is an un-exalted mind. If it is a surpassed mind, he understands that it is a surpassed mind and if it is an unsurpassed mind, he understands that it is an unsurpassed mind. If it is a concentrated mind, he understands that it is a concentrated mind and if it is an un-concentrated mind, he understands that it is an un-concentrated mind. If it is a liberated mind, he understands that it is a liberated mind and if it is an un-liberated mind, he understands that it is an un-liberated mind. This is how Our Buddha has taught us the way to practice contemplation on mind as mind.

Let us listen to this wonderful admonition of the Supreme Buddha and practice as he has taught us.

(4) Dwelling Contemplation of Mental Objects as Mental Objects (Dhamma)

These are the realization of the Dhamma. When the practitioner is practicing and developing the first three establishments of mindfulness (body as body, feelings as feelings, and mind as mind), his or her mind comes to the state of calmness and relaxation with the subsiding of the five hindrances and eventually all hindrances fade away not to arise again. That is the complete eradication of the five hindrances. With that realization, the practitioner sees that his mind is more and more clear, and with that clear mind can realize the true nature of things (*Dhamma as Dhamma*).

While practicing the above three establishments of

the mind is affected by lust, he understands that it is affected by lust; when it is unaffected by lust he understands that it is unaffected by lust. When it is affected by hate, he understands that it is affected by hate and when it is unaffected by hate, he understands that it is unaffected by hate. When it is affected by delusion, he understands that it is affected by delusion and when it is unaffected by delusion, he understands that it is unaffected by delusion. Whenever the mind is distracted, he understands that it is a distracted mind. Whenever the mind is contracted, he understands that it is contracted. If it is an exalted mind he understands that it is an exalted mind. If it is an un-exalted mind he understands that it is an un-exalted mind. If it is a surpassed mind, he understands that it is a surpassed mind and if it is an unsurpassed mind, he understands that it is an unsurpassed mind. If it is a concentrated mind, he understands that it is a concentrated mind and if it is an un-concentrated mind, he understands that it is an un-concentrated mind. If it is a liberated mind, he understands that it is a liberated mind and if it is an un-liberated mind, he understands that it is an un-liberated mind. This is how Our Buddha has taught us the way to practice contemplation on mind as mind.

Let us listen to this wonderful admonition of the Supreme Buddha and practice as he has taught us.

(4) Dwelling Contemplation of Mental Objects as Mental Objects (Dhamma)

These are the realization of the Dhamma. When the practitioner is practicing and developing the first three establishments of mindfulness (body as body, feelings as feelings, and mind as mind), his or her mind comes to the state of calmness and relaxation with the subsiding of the five hindrances and eventually all hindrances fade away not to arise again. That is the complete eradication of the five hindrances. With that realization, the practitioner sees that his mind is more and more clear, and with that clear mind can realize the true nature of things (*Dhamma as Dhamma*).

While practicing the above three establishments of

mindfulness, if the practitioner were to gain *jhanic* experience, he or she could subdue the hindrances. Now, the difference is not simply to subdue them, in this case, but completely exterminate the hindrances. This is because of practicing both serenity and insight in tandem.

In other words, this means whenever you practice concentration meditation, you can subdue five hindrances and whenever you practice and develop both serenity and insight in tandem, you can completely cut off hindrances seeing them all as they really are.

Complete Eradication of Five Hindrances

When we come to this section of the contemplation on mental objects as mental objects, all hindrances fade away. It is because of *vipassanā* or seeing them as they really are. What do we mean by seeing them as they are? While contemplating, the practitioner sees them all. Whenever there is sensual desire in him as a hindrance, he knows that there is sensual desire as a hindrance in him. Whenever there is no sensual desire in him as a hindrance, he knows that there is no sensual desire in him as a hindrance. Whenever the un-arisen sensual desire arises in him as a hindrance, he knows that un-arisen sensual desire arises in him as a hindrance. Whenever the arisen sensual desire passes away, he knows that the arisen sensual desire passes away. With the passing away of the sensual desire as a hindrance, he knows that it will never come to effect again. The other four hindrances namely, ill will, laziness and sleepiness, restlessness and worry, and doubts are the same. In this manner, the practitioner sees them all in five different ways. This is the result of *vipassanā*.

Realization of the Five Aggregates

Next, the practitioner mindfully observes the five aggregates of existence as they really are. He or she, while observing these five aggregates with mindfulness and clear comprehension, sees form, feelings, perception, volitional formations, and consciousness as they really are. The realization is as follows: This is form, this is the arising of

mindfulness, if the practitioner were to gain *jhanic* experience, he or she could subdue the hindrances. Now, the difference is not simply to subdue them, in this case, but completely exterminate the hindrances. This is because of practicing both serenity and insight in tandem.

In other words, this means whenever you practice concentration meditation, you can subdue five hindrances and whenever you practice and develop both serenity and insight in tandem, you can completely cut off hindrances seeing them all as they really are.

Complete Eradication of Five Hindrances

When we come to this section of the contemplation on mental objects as mental objects, all hindrances fade away. It is because of *vipassanā* or seeing them as they really are. What do we mean by seeing them as they are? While contemplating, the practitioner sees them all. Whenever there is sensual desire in him as a hindrance, he knows that there is sensual desire as a hindrance in him. Whenever there is no sensual desire in him as a hindrance, he knows that there is no sensual desire in him as a hindrance. Whenever the un-arisen sensual desire arises in him as a hindrance, he knows that un-arisen sensual desire arises in him as a hindrance. Whenever the arisen sensual desire passes away, he knows that the arisen sensual desire passes away. With the passing away of the sensual desire as a hindrance, he knows that it will never come to effect again. The other four hindrances namely, ill will, laziness and sleepiness, restlessness and worry, and doubts are the same. In this manner, the practitioner sees them all in five different ways. This is the result of *vipassanā*.

Realization of the Five Aggregates

Next, the practitioner mindfully observes the five aggregates of existence as they really are. He or she, while observing these five aggregates with mindfulness and clear comprehension, sees form, feelings, perception, volitional formations, and consciousness as they really are. The realization is as follows: This is form, this is the arising of

form, and this is the cessation of form. This is feeling, this is the arising of feeling, and this is the cessation of feeling. This is perception, this is the arising of perception, and this is the cessation of perception. These are volitional formations, this is the arising of volitional formations and this is the cessation of volitional formations. This is consciousness, this is the arising of consciousness, and this is the cessation of consciousness.

In this manner, the practitioner could be able to see the arising and passing of the five aggregates. That is *vipassanâ*. Realizing the five aggregates in this manner is itself the realization of *dukkha* (unsatisfactoriness). Whenever he realizes these five aggregates as a whole mass of *dukkha* he realizes the first truth of the Four Noble Truths.

For this realization of *vipassanâ*, one should have a good concentration as well. That is why the necessity of practicing both serenity and insight is always emphasized. Whenever and whoever practices both these together as tandem, it should meet with success.

The Realization of the Twelve Kinds of Bases

Having practiced and developed mind in this manner, the practitioner can then realize the six internal and six external bases. The six internal are:

1. The eye
2. The ear
3. The nose
4. The tongue
5. The body
6. The mind

The six external bases are:

1. Forms
2. Sounds
3. Odors
4. Tastes
5. Tangible Sensations
6. Mental Objects

form, and this is the cessation of form. This is feeling, this is the arising of feeling, and this is the cessation of feeling. This is perception, this is the arising of perception, and this is the cessation of perception. These are volitional formations, this is the arising of volitional formations and this is the cessation of volitional formations. This is consciousness, this is the arising of consciousness, and this is the cessation of consciousness.

In this manner, the practitioner could be able to see the arising and passing of the five aggregates. That is *vipassanâ*. Realizing the five aggregates in this manner is itself the realization of *dukkha* (unsatisfactoriness). Whenever he realizes these five aggregates as a whole mass of *dukkha* he realizes the first truth of the Four Noble Truths.

For this realization of *vipassanâ*, one should have a good concentration as well. That is why the necessity of practicing both serenity and insight is always emphasized. Whenever and whoever practices both these together as tandem, it should meet with success.

The Realization of the Twelve Kinds of Bases

Having practiced and developed mind in this manner, the practitioner can then realize the six internal and six external bases. The six internal are:

1. The eye
2. The ear
3. The nose
4. The tongue
5. The body
6. The mind

The six external bases are:

1. Forms
2. Sounds
3. Odors
4. Tastes
5. Tangible Sensations
6. Mental Objects

When the practitioner gives attention to these twelve bases with mindfulness and clear comprehension, he or she can understand and realize the true nature of these twelve bases. Here, he knows the eye, the form that impinges on the eyes, and the fetter that binds the two together. What one should really understand is this fetter. That is desire.

Since the practitioner's mind is quite developed by this time, he can understand clearly whenever the un-arisen fetter arises, whenever the arisen fetter passes, and also he can realize that the passing fetter never comes to arise again. Thus, the practitioner becomes free from the fetters of the eye, the ear, the nose, the tongue, the body, and the mind.

Now, let us pay attention to a very interesting and great Dhamma dialogue on these fetters between the “General of the Dhamma,” Venerable *Arahant Sâriputta*, and the Venerable *Arahant Mahâ Kotthita*. This is from the *Salâyatana Samyutta* of *The Connected Discourses of the Buddha*.⁹⁵ This is really a great revelation by these great *arahants*.

According to this discourse, once Venerable *Sâriputta* and *Mahâ Kotthita* were dwelling at *Isipatana Migadâya* in *Varanasi*.

One day, after his evening meditation, Venerable *Mahâ Kotthita* went to meet the Venerable *Sâriputta* and after their amicable talks and greetings and having taken a seat they started this Dhamma discussion. That was really a wonderful Dhamma discussion. They have discussed these points for you and me as if they did not know anything. However, we should not forget even for a moment that they both were enlightened great monks who illuminated this dispensation of the Buddha. Let us now understand their Dhamma discussion.

Venerable Mahâ Kotthita

Dear Venerable, this eye, is this eye fettered to the form or the form is fettered to the eye? This ear, is the ear fettered to the sound or the sound is fettered to the ear? This nose, is this nose fettered to the smell or the smell is fettered to the nose? This

When the practitioner gives attention to these twelve bases with mindfulness and clear comprehension, he or she can understand and realize the true nature of these twelve bases. Here, he knows the eye, the form that impinges on the eyes, and the fetter that binds the two together. What one should really understand is this fetter. That is desire.

Since the practitioner's mind is quite developed by this time, he can understand clearly whenever the un-arisen fetter arises, whenever the arisen fetter passes, and also he can realize that the passing fetter never comes to arise again. Thus, the practitioner becomes free from the fetters of the eye, the ear, the nose, the tongue, the body, and the mind.

Now, let us pay attention to a very interesting and great Dhamma dialogue on these fetters between the “General of the Dhamma,” Venerable *Arahant Sâriputta*, and the Venerable *Arahant Mahâ Kotthita*. This is from the *Salâyatana Samyutta* of *The Connected Discourses of the Buddha*.⁹⁵ This is really a great revelation by these great *arahants*.

According to this discourse, once Venerable *Sâriputta* and *Mahâ Kotthita* were dwelling at *Isipatana Migadâya* in *Varanasi*.

One day, after his evening meditation, Venerable *Mahâ Kotthita* went to meet the Venerable *Sâriputta* and after their amicable talks and greetings and having taken a seat they started this Dhamma discussion. That was really a wonderful Dhamma discussion. They have discussed these points for you and me as if they did not know anything. However, we should not forget even for a moment that they both were enlightened great monks who illuminated this dispensation of the Buddha. Let us now understand their Dhamma discussion.

Venerable Mahâ Kotthita

Dear Venerable, this eye, is this eye fettered to the form or the form is fettered to the eye? This ear, is the ear fettered to the sound or the sound is fettered to the ear? This nose, is this nose fettered to the smell or the smell is fettered to the nose? This

Tongue, is this tongue fettered to the taste or the taste is fettered to the tongue? This body, is the body fettered to the tangible or the tangible is fettered to the body? This mind, is the mind fettered to the mental object or the mental object is fettered to the mind?

Venerable Sâriputta

Dear Venerable, this eye is not fettered to the form or the form is not fettered to the eye, but whatever the delightful desire that arises because of these two is called fetter. The ear is not fettered to the sound or the sound is not fettered to the ear, but whatever the delightful desire that arises because of these two is called fetter. The nose is not fettered to the smell or the smell is not fettered to the nose, but whatever the delightful desire that arises because of these two is called fetter. The tongue is not fettered to the taste or taste is not fettered to the tongue, but whatever the delightful desire that arises because of these two is called fetter. The body is not fettered to the tangible or the tangible is not fettered to the body, but whatever the delightful desire that arises because of these two is called fetter. The mind is not fettered to the mental object or the mental object is not fettered to the mind, but whatever the delightful desire that arises because of these two is called fetter.

Now, venerable friend, suppose there are two bulls: one is black, the other is white. They both are fettered to each other with a rope like a yoke. Now they are going here and there seeking different pastures. Suppose, one would say that the black bull is fettered to the white one or the white bull is fettered to the black one would it be the right answer?" "No," said, Venerable *Mahâ Kotthita*.

Then, Venerable *Sâriputta* says, "The black bull is not the fetter of the white bull or the white bull is not the fetter of the black one. Since they are fettered with a rope, the rope is the fetter. Likewise, neither the eye nor the form is the fetter but their desire. Neither the ear nor the sound is fetter but their desire. Neither the nose nor the smell is fetter but their desire. Neither tongue nor the taste is fetter but their desire. Neither

Tongue, is this tongue fettered to the taste or the taste is fettered to the tongue? This body, is the body fettered to the tangible or the tangible is fettered to the body? This mind, is the mind fettered to the mental object or the mental object is fettered to the mind?

Venerable Sâriputta

Dear Venerable, this eye is not fettered to the form or the form is not fettered to the eye, but whatever the delightful desire that arises because of these two is called fetter. The ear is not fettered to the sound or the sound is not fettered to the ear, but whatever the delightful desire that arises because of these two is called fetter. The nose is not fettered to the smell or the smell is not fettered to the nose, but whatever the delightful desire that arises because of these two is called fetter. The tongue is not fettered to the taste or taste is not fettered to the tongue, but whatever the delightful desire that arises because of these two is called fetter. The body is not fettered to the tangible or the tangible is not fettered to the body, but whatever the delightful desire that arises because of these two is called fetter. The mind is not fettered to the mental object or the mental object is not fettered to the mind, but whatever the delightful desire that arises because of these two is called fetter.

Now, venerable friend, suppose there are two bulls: one is black, the other is white. They both are fettered to each other with a rope like a yoke. Now they are going here and there seeking different pastures. Suppose, one would say that the black bull is fettered to the white one or the white bull is fettered to the black one would it be the right answer?" "No," said, Venerable *Mahâ Kotthita*.

Then, Venerable *Sâriputta* says, "The black bull is not the fetter of the white bull or the white bull is not the fetter of the black one. Since they are fettered with a rope, the rope is the fetter. Likewise, neither the eye nor the form is the fetter but their desire. Neither the ear nor the sound is fetter but their desire. Neither the nose nor the smell is fetter but their desire. Neither tongue nor the taste is fetter but their desire. Neither

body nor the tangible is fetter but their desire. Neither the mind nor the mental object is fetter but their desire.

Venerable friend, if the eye were the fetter or the form were the fetter, this holy life that is being developed and cultivated for the purpose of complete cessation of *dukkha* would never be revealed. If the ear... nose... tongue... body... mind were the fetter or the mental object were the fetter this holy life which is being developed and cultivated for the purpose of complete cessation of *dukkha* would never be revealed.

Venerable, even the Blessed One has the eye. The Blessed One also sees form through the eye. However, the Blessed One has no delightful desire of them. The Blessed One dwells with a mind, which is completely free from such desire." [This is the difference between the Buddha and us].

In such a way, what the practitioner should understand is the desire lies in these bases. Once the desire is realized, there is nothing to be called a base either. Then, the practitioner would be able to understand all these bases come to be because of causes and then they come to pass with the cessation of causes.

The Realization of the Seven Factors of Enlightenment

Next, the practitioner pays his or her attention to understand and realize the seven factors of enlightenment. They are:

1. Mindfulness
2. Investigation of the dhamma
3. Energy
4. Rapture
5. Tranquility
6. Concentration
7. Equanimity

These seven are called '*bojjhanga*' (*bodhi+anga= bojjhanga*) because they lead one to the attainment of enlightenment. In other words, they are the factors to be developed for the attainment of '*bodhi*,' enlightenment.

body nor the tangible is fetter but their desire. Neither the mind nor the mental object is fetter but their desire.

Venerable friend, if the eye were the fetter or the form were the fetter, this holy life that is being developed and cultivated for the purpose of complete cessation of *dukkha* would never be revealed. If the ear... nose... tongue... body... mind were the fetter or the mental object were the fetter this holy life which is being developed and cultivated for the purpose of complete cessation of *dukkha* would never be revealed.

Venerable, even the Blessed One has the eye. The Blessed One also sees form through the eye. However, the Blessed One has no delightful desire of them. The Blessed One dwells with a mind, which is completely free from such desire." [This is the difference between the Buddha and us].

In such a way, what the practitioner should understand is the desire lies in these bases. Once the desire is realized, there is nothing to be called a base either. Then, the practitioner would be able to understand all these bases come to be because of causes and then they come to pass with the cessation of causes.

The Realization of the Seven Factors of Enlightenment

Next, the practitioner pays his or her attention to understand and realize the seven factors of enlightenment. They are:

1. Mindfulness
2. Investigation of the dhamma
3. Energy
4. Rapture
5. Tranquility
6. Concentration
7. Equanimity

These seven are called '*bojjhanga*' (*bodhi+anga= bojjhanga*) because they lead one to the attainment of enlightenment. In other words, they are the factors to be developed for the attainment of '*bodhi*,' enlightenment.

Once, a certain *bhikkhu* went to the Buddha and asked, “Bhante, '*bojjhanga*,' '*bojjhanga*' is said, what are these *bojjhanga*?” Then, the Buddha said, “They lead to enlightenment, *bhikkhu*, therefore they are called factors of enlightenment(*bojjhanga*). Here, *bhikkhu*, one develops the enlightenment factor of mindfulness, which is based upon seclusion, dispassion, and cessation, maturing in release.... One develops the enlightenment factor of equanimity, which is based upon seclusion, dispassion, and cessation, maturing in release. While one is developing these seven factors of enlightenment, one's mind is liberated from the taint of sensuality, from the taint of existence, from the taint of ignorance. When it is liberated there comes the knowledge: 'It's liberated.' One understands: 'Destroyed is birth, the holy life has been lived, what had to be done has been done, there is no more for this state of being.' They lead to enlightenment, *bhikkhu*, therefore they are called factors of enlightenment.”⁹⁶

In the *Bojjhanga Samyutta* of *The Connected Discourses of the Buddha*, Our Buddha has very clearly described with a beautiful simile how these enlightenment factors are developed and cultivated. According to the *Himavanta Sutta* of this chapter, the Buddha says, “*Bhikkhus*, based upon the Himalayas, the king of mountains, the nagas nurture their bodies and acquire strength. When they have nurtured their bodies and acquired strength, they then enter the pools. From the pools they enter the lakes, then the streams, then the rivers, and finally they enter the ocean. There they achieve greatness and expansiveness of body. So too, *bhikkhus*, based upon virtue, established upon virtue, a *bhikkhu* develops and cultivates the seven factors of enlightenment, and thereby he achieves greatness and expansiveness in [wholesome] states.

“And how does a *bhikkhu*, based upon virtue, established upon virtue, develop the seven factors of enlightenment? Here, *bhikkhus*, a *bhikkhu* develops the enlightenment factor of mindfulness, which is based upon seclusion, dispassion, and cessation, maturing in release. He develops the enlightenment factor of discrimination of states ... the enlightenment factor of energy ... the enlightenment factor of

Once, a certain *bhikkhu* went to the Buddha and asked, “Bhante, '*bojjhanga*,' '*bojjhanga*' is said, what are these *bojjhanga*?” Then, the Buddha said, “They lead to enlightenment, *bhikkhu*, therefore they are called factors of enlightenment(*bojjhanga*). Here, *bhikkhu*, one develops the enlightenment factor of mindfulness, which is based upon seclusion, dispassion, and cessation, maturing in release.... One develops the enlightenment factor of equanimity, which is based upon seclusion, dispassion, and cessation, maturing in release. While one is developing these seven factors of enlightenment, one's mind is liberated from the taint of sensuality, from the taint of existence, from the taint of ignorance. When it is liberated there comes the knowledge: 'It's liberated.' One understands: 'Destroyed is birth, the holy life has been lived, what had to be done has been done, there is no more for this state of being.' They lead to enlightenment, *bhikkhu*, therefore they are called factors of enlightenment.”⁹⁶

In the *Bojjhanga Samyutta* of *The Connected Discourses of the Buddha*, Our Buddha has very clearly described with a beautiful simile how these enlightenment factors are developed and cultivated. According to the *Himavanta Sutta* of this chapter, the Buddha says, “*Bhikkhus*, based upon the Himalayas, the king of mountains, the nagas nurture their bodies and acquire strength. When they have nurtured their bodies and acquired strength, they then enter the pools. From the pools they enter the lakes, then the streams, then the rivers, and finally they enter the ocean. There they achieve greatness and expansiveness of body. So too, *bhikkhus*, based upon virtue, established upon virtue, a *bhikkhu* develops and cultivates the seven factors of enlightenment, and thereby he achieves greatness and expansiveness in [wholesome] states.

“And how does a *bhikkhu*, based upon virtue, established upon virtue, develop the seven factors of enlightenment? Here, *bhikkhus*, a *bhikkhu* develops the enlightenment factor of mindfulness, which is based upon seclusion, dispassion, and cessation, maturing in release. He develops the enlightenment factor of discrimination of states ... the enlightenment factor of energy ... the enlightenment factor of

rapture ... the enlightenment factor of tranquility ... the enlightenment factor of concentration ... the enlightenment factor of equanimity, which is based upon seclusion, dispassion, and cessation, maturing in release. It is in this way, *bhikkhus*, that a *bhikkhu*, based upon virtue, established upon virtue, develops the seven factors of enlightenment, and thereby achieves greatness and expansiveness in [wholesome] states.”⁹⁷

Once these factors are well developed, cultivated, and made much of, one can use them and manipulate them as one wishes. Venerable *Sāriputta* once said how he himself did so. Venerable *Sāriputta* said, “Suppose, friends, a king or a royal minister had a wardrobe full of differently colored clothes. Whatever suit he might want to wear in the morning he would wear in the morning. Whatever suit he might want to wear during the middle of the day he would wear during the middle of the day. Whatever suit he might want to wear in the evening he would wear in the evening. So too, friends, whichever of these seven factors of enlightenment I want to dwell in during the morning ... during the middle of the day ... during the evening, I dwell in that factor of enlightenment during the evening.”⁹⁸

In the *Sila Sutta* of *The Connected Discourses of the Buddha*, Our Buddha, the leader of peace, says, “Monks, those *bhikkhus* who are accomplished in virtue, accomplished in concentration, accomplished in wisdom, accomplished in liberation, accomplished in the knowledge and vision of liberation: even the sight of those *bhikkhus* is helpful, I say; even listening to them...even approaching them... even attending on them...even recollecting them... even going forth after them is helpful, I say. For what reason? Because when one has heard the Dhamma from such *bhikkhus* one dwells withdrawn by way of two kinds of withdrawal withdrawal of body and withdrawal of mind.

“Dwelling thus withdrawn, one recollects that Dhamma and thinks it over. Whenever, *bhikkhus*, a *bhikkhu* dwelling thus withdrawn recollects that Dhamma and thinks it over, on that occasion the enlightenment factor of mindfulness is aroused

rapture ... the enlightenment factor of tranquility ... the enlightenment factor of concentration ... the enlightenment factor of equanimity, which is based upon seclusion, dispassion, and cessation, maturing in release. It is in this way, *bhikkhus*, that a *bhikkhu*, based upon virtue, established upon virtue, develops the seven factors of enlightenment, and thereby achieves greatness and expansiveness in [wholesome] states.”⁹⁷

Once these factors are well developed, cultivated, and made much of, one can use them and manipulate them as one wishes. Venerable *Sāriputta* once said how he himself did so. Venerable *Sāriputta* said, “Suppose, friends, a king or a royal minister had a wardrobe full of differently colored clothes. Whatever suit he might want to wear in the morning he would wear in the morning. Whatever suit he might want to wear during the middle of the day he would wear during the middle of the day. Whatever suit he might want to wear in the evening he would wear in the evening. So too, friends, whichever of these seven factors of enlightenment I want to dwell in during the morning ... during the middle of the day ... during the evening, I dwell in that factor of enlightenment during the evening.”⁹⁸

In the *Sila Sutta* of *The Connected Discourses of the Buddha*, Our Buddha, the leader of peace, says, “Monks, those *bhikkhus* who are accomplished in virtue, accomplished in concentration, accomplished in wisdom, accomplished in liberation, accomplished in the knowledge and vision of liberation: even the sight of those *bhikkhus* is helpful, I say; even listening to them...even approaching them... even attending on them...even recollecting them... even going forth after them is helpful, I say. For what reason? Because when one has heard the Dhamma from such *bhikkhus* one dwells withdrawn by way of two kinds of withdrawal withdrawal of body and withdrawal of mind.

“Dwelling thus withdrawn, one recollects that Dhamma and thinks it over. Whenever, *bhikkhus*, a *bhikkhu* dwelling thus withdrawn recollects that Dhamma and thinks it over, on that occasion the enlightenment factor of mindfulness is aroused

by the *bhikkhu*; on that occasion the enlightenment factor of mindfulness comes to fulfillment by development in the *bhikkhu*.

“Dwelling thus mindfully, he discriminates that Dhamma with wisdom, examines it, makes an investigation of it. Whenever, *bhikkhus*, a *bhikkhu* dwelling thus mindfully discriminates that Dhamma with wisdom, examines it, makes an investigation of it, on that occasion the enlightenment factor of discrimination of states is aroused by the *bhikkhu*; on that occasion the *bhikkhu* develops the enlightenment factor of discrimination of states; on that occasion the enlightenment factor of discrimination of states comes to fulfillment by development in the *bhikkhu*.

“While he discriminates that Dhamma with wisdom, examines it, makes an investigation of it, his energy is aroused without slackening. Whenever, *bhikkhus*, a *bhikkhu*'s energy is aroused without slackening as he discriminates that Dhamma with wisdom, examines it, makes an investigation of it, on that occasion the enlightenment factor of energy is aroused by the *bhikkhu*; on that occasion the *bhikkhu* develops the enlightenment factor of energy; on that occasion the enlightenment factor of energy comes to fulfillment by development in the *bhikkhu*.

“When his energy is aroused, there arises in him spiritual rapture. Whenever, *bhikkhus*, spiritual rapture arises in a *bhikkhu* whose energy is aroused, on that occasion the enlightenment factor of rapture is aroused by the *bhikkhu*; on that occasion the *bhikkhu* develops the enlightenment factor of rapture; on that occasion the enlightenment factor of rapture comes to fulfillment by development in the *bhikkhu*.

“For one whose mind is uplifted by rapture, the body becomes tranquil and the mind becomes tranquil. Whenever, *bhikkhus*, the body becomes tranquil and the mind becomes tranquil in a *bhikkhu* whose mind is uplifted by rapture, on that occasion the enlightenment factor of tranquility is aroused by the *bhikkhu*; on that occasion the *bhikkhu* develops the enlightenment factor of tranquility; on that occasion the

by the *bhikkhu*; on that occasion the enlightenment factor of mindfulness comes to fulfillment by development in the *bhikkhu*.

“Dwelling thus mindfully, he discriminates that Dhamma with wisdom, examines it, makes an investigation of it. Whenever, *bhikkhus*, a *bhikkhu* dwelling thus mindfully discriminates that Dhamma with wisdom, examines it, makes an investigation of it, on that occasion the enlightenment factor of discrimination of states is aroused by the *bhikkhu*; on that occasion the *bhikkhu* develops the enlightenment factor of discrimination of states; on that occasion the enlightenment factor of discrimination of states comes to fulfillment by development in the *bhikkhu*.

“While he discriminates that Dhamma with wisdom, examines it, makes an investigation of it, his energy is aroused without slackening. Whenever, *bhikkhus*, a *bhikkhu*'s energy is aroused without slackening as he discriminates that Dhamma with wisdom, examines it, makes an investigation of it, on that occasion the enlightenment factor of energy is aroused by the *bhikkhu*; on that occasion the *bhikkhu* develops the enlightenment factor of energy; on that occasion the enlightenment factor of energy comes to fulfillment by development in the *bhikkhu*.

“When his energy is aroused, there arises in him spiritual rapture. Whenever, *bhikkhus*, spiritual rapture arises in a *bhikkhu* whose energy is aroused, on that occasion the enlightenment factor of rapture is aroused by the *bhikkhu*; on that occasion the *bhikkhu* develops the enlightenment factor of rapture; on that occasion the enlightenment factor of rapture comes to fulfillment by development in the *bhikkhu*.

“For one whose mind is uplifted by rapture, the body becomes tranquil and the mind becomes tranquil. Whenever, *bhikkhus*, the body becomes tranquil and the mind becomes tranquil in a *bhikkhu* whose mind is uplifted by rapture, on that occasion the enlightenment factor of tranquility is aroused by the *bhikkhu*; on that occasion the *bhikkhu* develops the enlightenment factor of tranquility; on that occasion the

enlightenment factor of tranquility comes to fulfillment by development in the *bhikkhu*.

“For one whose body is tranquil and who is happy, the mind becomes concentrated. Whenever, *bhikkhus*, the mind becomes concentrated in a *bhikkhu* whose body is tranquil and who is happy, on that occasion the enlightenment factor of concentration is aroused by the *bhikkhu*; on that occasion the *bhikkhu* develops the enlightenment factor of concentration; on that occasion the enlightenment factor of concentration comes to fulfillment by development in the *bhikkhu*. He closely looks on with equanimity at the mind thus concentrated. Whenever, *bhikkhus*, a *bhikkhu* closely looks on with equanimity at the mind thus concentrated, on that occasion the enlightenment factor of equanimity is aroused by the *bhikkhu*; on that occasion the *bhikkhu* develops the enlightenment factor of equanimity; on that occasion the enlightenment factor of equanimity comes to fulfillment by development in the *bhikkhu*.

“*Bhikkhus*, when these seven factors of enlightenment have been developed and cultivated in this way, seven fruits and benefits may be expected. What are the seven fruits and benefits?

“One attains final knowledge early in this very life. If one does not attain final knowledge early in this very life, then one attains final knowledge at the time of death. If one does not attain final knowledge early in this very life or at the time of death, then with the utter destruction of the five lower fetters one becomes an attainer of *Nibbāna* in the interval. If one does not attain final knowledge early in this very life ... or become an attainer of *Nibbāna* in the interval, then with the utter destruction of the five lower fetters one becomes an attainer of *Nibbāna* upon landing. If one does not attain final knowledge early in this very life ... or become an attainer of *Nibbāna* upon landing, then with the utter destruction of the five lower fetters one becomes an attainer of *Nibbāna* without exertion. If one does not attain final knowledge early in this very life ... or become an attainer of *Nibbāna* without exertion, then with the utter destruction of the five lower

enlightenment factor of tranquility comes to fulfillment by development in the *bhikkhu*.

“For one whose body is tranquil and who is happy, the mind becomes concentrated. Whenever, *bhikkhus*, the mind becomes concentrated in a *bhikkhu* whose body is tranquil and who is happy, on that occasion the enlightenment factor of concentration is aroused by the *bhikkhu*; on that occasion the *bhikkhu* develops the enlightenment factor of concentration; on that occasion the enlightenment factor of concentration comes to fulfillment by development in the *bhikkhu*. He closely looks on with equanimity at the mind thus concentrated. Whenever, *bhikkhus*, a *bhikkhu* closely looks on with equanimity at the mind thus concentrated, on that occasion the enlightenment factor of equanimity is aroused by the *bhikkhu*; on that occasion the *bhikkhu* develops the enlightenment factor of equanimity; on that occasion the enlightenment factor of equanimity comes to fulfillment by development in the *bhikkhu*.

“*Bhikkhus*, when these seven factors of enlightenment have been developed and cultivated in this way, seven fruits and benefits may be expected. What are the seven fruits and benefits?

“One attains final knowledge early in this very life. If one does not attain final knowledge early in this very life, then one attains final knowledge at the time of death. If one does not attain final knowledge early in this very life or at the time of death, then with the utter destruction of the five lower fetters one becomes an attainer of *Nibbāna* in the interval. If one does not attain final knowledge early in this very life ... or become an attainer of *Nibbāna* in the interval, then with the utter destruction of the five lower fetters one becomes an attainer of *Nibbāna* upon landing. If one does not attain final knowledge early in this very life ... or become an attainer of *Nibbāna* upon landing, then with the utter destruction of the five lower fetters one becomes an attainer of *Nibbāna* without exertion. If one does not attain final knowledge early in this very life ... or become an attainer of *Nibbāna* without exertion, then with the utter destruction of the five lower

fetters one becomes an attainer of *Nibbâna* with exertion. If one does not attain final knowledge early in this very life ... or become an attainer of *Nibbâna* with exertion, then with the utter destruction of the five lower fetters one becomes one bound upstream, heading towards the *Akanittha* realm. When, *bhikkhus*, the seven factors of enlightenment have been developed and cultivated in this way, these seven fruits and benefits may be expected.”⁹⁹

By giving a wonderful and amazing simile of the peaked house, in *The Connected Discourses of the Buddha*, Our Buddha says, “Monks, just as all the rafters of a peaked house slant, slope, and incline towards the roof peak, so too, when a *bhikkhu* develops and cultivates the seven factors of enlightenment, he slants, slopes and inclines towards *Nibbâna*.”¹⁰⁰

In accordance with the *Uppâda Sutta*, the Buddha says these seven factors of enlightenment are present only in the presence of the Buddha, not during the absence of the Buddha and also that these seven can be practiced, developed, and cultivated only during the time of the Supreme Buddha. It means it is impossible to develop them in any other faith or dispensation. Our Buddha says this clearly, “*Bhikkhus*, these seven factors of enlightenment, developed and cultivated, if unarisen do not arise apart from the appearance of a *Tathâgata*, an *Arahant*, a Perfectly Enlightened One. What seven? The enlightenment factor of mindfulness ... the enlightenment factor of equanimity. These seven factors of enlightenment, developed and cultivated, if unarisen do not arise apart from the appearance of a *Tathâgata*, an *Arahant*, a Perfectly Enlightened One. *Bhikkhus*, these seven factors of enlightenment, developed and cultivated, if unarisen do not arise apart from the Discipline of a Fortunate One. What seven? The enlightenment factor of mindfulness...and the enlightenment factor of equanimity. These seven factors of enlightenment, developed and cultivated, if unarisen do not arise apart from the Discipline of a Fortunate One.”¹⁰¹

When these factors of enlightenment are developed and

fetters one becomes an attainer of *Nibbâna* with exertion. If one does not attain final knowledge early in this very life ... or become an attainer of *Nibbâna* with exertion, then with the utter destruction of the five lower fetters one becomes one bound upstream, heading towards the *Akanittha* realm. When, *bhikkhus*, the seven factors of enlightenment have been developed and cultivated in this way, these seven fruits and benefits may be expected.”⁹⁹

By giving a wonderful and amazing simile of the peaked house, in *The Connected Discourses of the Buddha*, Our Buddha says, “Monks, just as all the rafters of a peaked house slant, slope, and incline towards the roof peak, so too, when a *bhikkhu* develops and cultivates the seven factors of enlightenment, he slants, slopes and inclines towards *Nibbâna*.”¹⁰⁰

In accordance with the *Uppâda Sutta*, the Buddha says these seven factors of enlightenment are present only in the presence of the Buddha, not during the absence of the Buddha and also that these seven can be practiced, developed, and cultivated only during the time of the Supreme Buddha. It means it is impossible to develop them in any other faith or dispensation. Our Buddha says this clearly, “*Bhikkhus*, these seven factors of enlightenment, developed and cultivated, if unarisen do not arise apart from the appearance of a *Tathâgata*, an *Arahant*, a Perfectly Enlightened One. What seven? The enlightenment factor of mindfulness ... the enlightenment factor of equanimity. These seven factors of enlightenment, developed and cultivated, if unarisen do not arise apart from the appearance of a *Tathâgata*, an *Arahant*, a Perfectly Enlightened One. *Bhikkhus*, these seven factors of enlightenment, developed and cultivated, if unarisen do not arise apart from the Discipline of a Fortunate One. What seven? The enlightenment factor of mindfulness...and the enlightenment factor of equanimity. These seven factors of enlightenment, developed and cultivated, if unarisen do not arise apart from the Discipline of a Fortunate One.”¹⁰¹

When these factors of enlightenment are developed and

cultivated in this manner, one can experience the factor of equanimity as the seventh and last factor. When it is practiced and developed, one can understand *dukkha* or unsatisfactoriness as it really is. Since he or she has cultivated the equanimity factor of enlightenment, it is easy to understand the Four Noble Truths as they really are, mainly due to an equanimous mind.

Realization of the Four Noble Truths

The Four Noble Truths are the truths realized for the first time in human history by Our Buddha who is called the Noble One. These truths themselves are called 'noble' because he realized them and also because one becomes “a noble one” with their realization. They exist eternally in the world within oneself. Our Supreme Buddha realized them as they really are and revealed them to the world. They are the central concept of the teaching of the Buddha. Without realizing these Four Noble Truths, nobody can attain the four stages of the holy life as stream enterer, once returner, non-returner, or arahant.

In the world, there is only one truth. It is because of not understanding, not penetrating, not realizing this one truth, people when seek truth grasp many different things as truth mistakenly. Once Our Buddha said, “There is only one truth, not two” (*ekam hi saccam na dutiyamatthi*). Truth must be one, and it must be common to all beings. Truth should be always truth. Then, why should we talk about Four Noble Truths?

There are of course, not four truths, but four facets of truth. The truth in the world is nothing but unsatisfactoriness. Once a certain deity came to the Buddha and said,

By what is the world ensnared?
By what is it enveloped?
By what is the world shut in?
On what is the world established?”
The Buddha then said,
“The world is ensnared by craving;
It is enveloped by old age;

cultivated in this manner, one can experience the factor of equanimity as the seventh and last factor. When it is practiced and developed, one can understand *dukkha* or unsatisfactoriness as it really is. Since he or she has cultivated the equanimity factor of enlightenment, it is easy to understand the Four Noble Truths as they really are, mainly due to an equanimous mind.

Realization of the Four Noble Truths

The Four Noble Truths are the truths realized for the first time in human history by Our Buddha who is called the Noble One. These truths themselves are called 'noble' because he realized them and also because one becomes “a noble one” with their realization. They exist eternally in the world within oneself. Our Supreme Buddha realized them as they really are and revealed them to the world. They are the central concept of the teaching of the Buddha. Without realizing these Four Noble Truths, nobody can attain the four stages of the holy life as stream enterer, once returner, non-returner, or arahant.

In the world, there is only one truth. It is because of not understanding, not penetrating, not realizing this one truth, people when seek truth grasp many different things as truth mistakenly. Once Our Buddha said, “There is only one truth, not two” (*ekam hi saccam na dutiyamatthi*). Truth must be one, and it must be common to all beings. Truth should be always truth. Then, why should we talk about Four Noble Truths?

There are of course, not four truths, but four facets of truth. The truth in the world is nothing but unsatisfactoriness. Once a certain deity came to the Buddha and said,

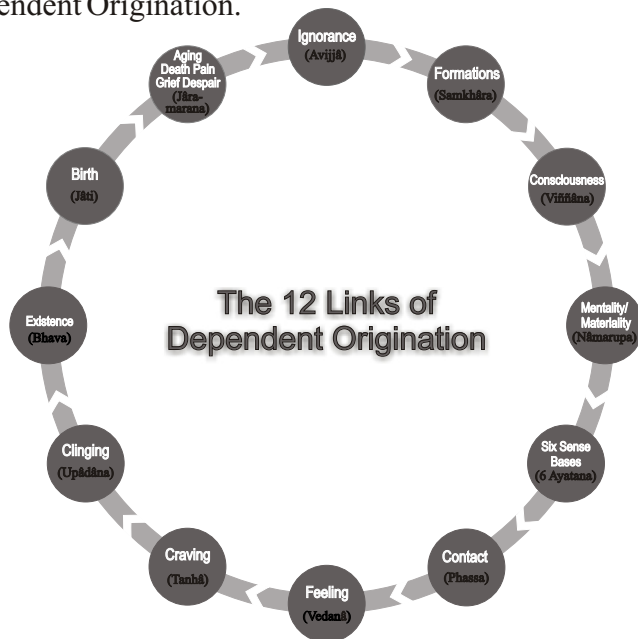
By what is the world ensnared?
By what is it enveloped?
By what is the world shut in?
On what is the world established?”
The Buddha then said,
“The world is ensnared by craving;
It is enveloped by old age;

The world is shut in by death;
The world is established on suffering.¹⁰²

One day, a group of sixteen students came to see the Buddha, and the most senior student named *Ajitha* asked these questions from the Buddha,

With what is it that the world is shrouded?
What makes the world so hard to see it?
What would you say that smeared the world?
And what is its greatest fear?”
The Buddha answered thus:
“The world is smothered by ignorance
Because of stinginess and heedlessness it is invisible
It is smeared with craving
The greatest fear of it is *dukkha*.¹⁰³

According to this, we can understand clearly that the greatest fear all beings in the world have for nothing but suffering. Our Supreme Buddha has very clearly taught us how this great fear of *dukkha* arises and how it passes as well. That is through his wonderful and unparalleled teaching of the Dependent Origination.

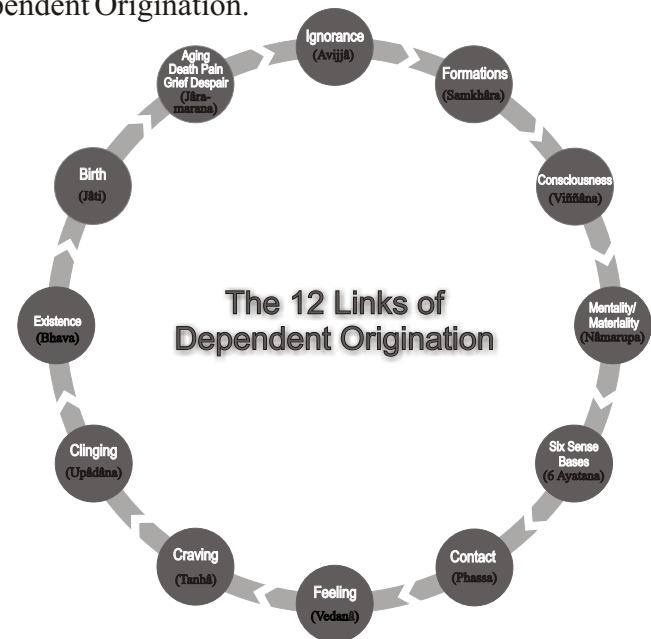


The world is shut in by death;
The world is established on suffering.¹⁰²

One day, a group of sixteen students came to see the Buddha, and the most senior student named *Ajitha* asked these questions from the Buddha,

With what is it that the world is shrouded?
What makes the world so hard to see it?
What would you say that smeared the world?
And what is its greatest fear?”
The Buddha answered thus:
“The world is smothered by ignorance
Because of stinginess and heedlessness it is invisible
It is smeared with craving
The greatest fear of it is *dukkha*.¹⁰³

According to this, we can understand clearly that the greatest fear all beings in the world have for nothing but suffering. Our Supreme Buddha has very clearly taught us how this great fear of *dukkha* arises and how it passes as well. That is through his wonderful and unparalleled teaching of the Dependent Origination.



As we see, it is the most profound teaching of the Buddha (*Abhidhamma*).¹⁰⁴ In accordance with this magnificent teaching of the Buddha, what always arise within our mind are the five hindrances. It is because of these hindrances that ignorance arises. They are interdependent. Thus, dependent on ignorance, volitional formations arise. Dependent on volitional formations, consciousness arises. Dependent on consciousness, mentality and materiality arise. Dependent on mentality and materiality, the sixfold base arises. Dependent on the sixfold base, contact arises. Dependent on contact, feeling arises. Dependent on feeling, craving arises. Dependent on craving, attachment arises. Dependent on attachment, existence arises. Dependent on existence, birth arises. Dependent on birth, aging and death arise and, sorrow, lamentation, pain, grief and despair. Thus, there is the arising of this whole mass of suffering.

As the Buddha clearly illustrated through the entire cessation of this ignorance, volitional formations cease. Through the cessation of volitional formations, consciousness ceases. Through the cessation of consciousness, mentality and materiality cease. Through the cessation of mentality and materiality, the sixfold base ceases. Through the cessation of the sixfold base, contact ceases. Through the cessation of contact, feeling ceases. Through the cessation of feeling, craving ceases. Through the cessation of craving, attachment ceases. Through the cessation of attachment, existence ceases. Through the cessation of existence, birth ceases. Through the cessation of birth, aging and death cease, and sorrow, lamentation, pain, grief, and despair. Thus, there is the cessation of this whole mass of suffering.

According to the Four Noble Truths, it is clear that all these *dukkha* arise because of craving. With the cessation of craving, all *dukkha* comes to cease. For the cessation of *dukkha*, there is a path. That path is solely the Noble Eightfold Path. That is the only path for the attainment of enlightenment. When some one practiced and developed this Noble Eightfold Path, that itself becomes the Tenfold Path, and Eventually any practitioner attains full enlightenment

As we see, it is the most profound teaching of the Buddha (*Abhidhamma*).¹⁰⁴ In accordance with this magnificent teaching of the Buddha, what always arise within our mind are the five hindrances. It is because of these hindrances that ignorance arises. They are interdependent. Thus, dependent on ignorance, volitional formations arise. Dependent on volitional formations, consciousness arises. Dependent on consciousness, mentality and materiality arise. Dependent on mentality and materiality, the sixfold base arises. Dependent on the sixfold base, contact arises. Dependent on contact, feeling arises. Dependent on feeling, craving arises. Dependent on craving, attachment arises. Dependent on attachment, existence arises. Dependent on existence, birth arises. Dependent on birth, aging and death arise and, sorrow, lamentation, pain, grief and despair. Thus, there is the arising of this whole mass of suffering.

As the Buddha clearly illustrated through the entire cessation of this ignorance, volitional formations cease. Through the cessation of volitional formations, consciousness ceases. Through the cessation of consciousness, mentality and materiality cease. Through the cessation of mentality and materiality, the sixfold base ceases. Through the cessation of the sixfold base, contact ceases. Through the cessation of contact, feeling ceases. Through the cessation of feeling, craving ceases. Through the cessation of craving, attachment ceases. Through the cessation of attachment, existence ceases. Through the cessation of existence, birth ceases. Through the cessation of birth, aging and death cease, and sorrow, lamentation, pain, grief, and despair. Thus, there is the cessation of this whole mass of suffering.

According to the Four Noble Truths, it is clear that all these *dukkha* arise because of craving. With the cessation of craving, all *dukkha* comes to cease. For the cessation of *dukkha*, there is a path. That path is solely the Noble Eightfold Path. That is the only path for the attainment of enlightenment. When some one practiced and developed this Noble Eightfold Path, that itself becomes the Tenfold Path, and

by realizing the true nature of all things.

After his attainment of supreme enlightenment, Our Buddha delivered his first sermon on the full moon day of July. In this discourse, he talked about the Four Noble Truths very clearly. When he described what *dukkha* is he said, “Birth is *dukkha*, decay is *dukkha*, disease is *dukkha*, death is *dukkha*, associating with unpleasant ones is *dukkha*, dissociating from pleasant ones is *dukkha*, and not getting what one desires is *dukkha*, and finally said, in short, the five aggregates affected by clinging are *dukkha*.”

The Buddha revealed craving as the cause of *dukkha*. Craving is threefold; namely, craving for sensual pleasures (*kāmatanhā*), craving for existence (*bhavatanhā*), and craving for non-existence (*vibhavatanhā*).

The cessation of *dukkha* itself is the attainment of enlightenment and the path for that is the Noble Eightfold Path.¹⁰⁵

As the Buddha said, *dukkha* should be comprehended (*pariññeyyam*), the cause of *dukkha* should be abandoned (*pahātabbam*), the cessation of *dukkha* should be realized (*saccikātabbam*), and the path for the cessation of *dukkha* should be developed (*bhāvetabbam*).

Dukkha should be comprehended within these five aggregates. It is not in the external world out there, but within us. Most of the time, when the Buddha used the term *loka* (world), he referred to the so-called individual person. Therefore, when he says *dukkha* is in the world, that means *dukkha* is within oneself.

Once the Buddha, addressing a deity named *Rohitassa* said, “The world, the origination of the world, cessation of the world and the path leading to the cessation of the world is within this fathom high body with perception and consciousness.”¹⁰⁶

by realizing the true nature of all things.

After his attainment of supreme enlightenment, Our Buddha delivered his first sermon on the full moon day of July. In this discourse, he talked about the Four Noble Truths very clearly. When he described what *dukkha* is he said, “Birth is *dukkha*, decay is *dukkha*, disease is *dukkha*, death is *dukkha*, associating with unpleasant ones is *dukkha*, dissociating from pleasant ones is *dukkha*, and not getting what one desires is *dukkha*, and finally said, in short, the five aggregates affected by clinging are *dukkha*.”

The Buddha revealed craving as the cause of *dukkha*. Craving is threefold; namely, craving for sensual pleasures (*kāmatanhā*), craving for existence (*bhavatanhā*), and craving for non-existence (*vibhavatanhā*).

The cessation of *dukkha* itself is the attainment of enlightenment and the path for that is the Noble Eightfold Path.¹⁰⁵

As the Buddha said, *dukkha* should be comprehended (*pariññeyyam*), the cause of *dukkha* should be abandoned (*pahātabbam*), the cessation of *dukkha* should be realized (*saccikātabbam*), and the path for the cessation of *dukkha* should be developed (*bhāvetabbam*).

Dukkha should be comprehended within these five aggregates. It is not in the external world out there, but within us. Most of the time, when the Buddha used the term *loka* (world), he referred to the so-called individual person. Therefore, when he says *dukkha* is in the world, that means *dukkha* is within oneself.

Once the Buddha, addressing a deity named *Rohitassa* said, “The world, the origination of the world, cessation of the world and the path leading to the cessation of the world is within this fathom high body with perception and consciousness.”¹⁰⁶

The Four Noble Truths is the most excellent teaching of all the Buddhas, those in the past, those to come in the future, and during the time of Our Buddha up to the present day. This is why Venerable *Sâriputta*, in the “Great Discourse of the Simile of the Elephant's Footprint” said, “Friends, just as the footprint of any living being that walks can be placed within an elephant's footprint, and so the elephant's footprint is declared the chief of them because of its great size; so too, all wholesome states can be included in the Four Noble Truths.

In what four? In the noble truth of suffering, in the noble truth of the origin of suffering, in the noble truth of the cessation of suffering, and in the noble truth of the way leading to the cessation of suffering.”¹⁰⁷

Once, Our Buddha was dwelling at the place called *Kotigama* where he addressed his disciples and said, “*Bhikkhus*, it is because of not understanding and not penetrating the Four Noble Truths that you and I have roamed and wandered through this long course of *samsâra*. What four? It is, *bhikkhus*, because of not understanding and not penetrating the noble truth of suffering that you and I have roamed and wandered through this long course of *samsâra*. It is because of not understanding and not penetrating the noble truth of the origin of suffering ... the noble truth of the cessation of suffering ... the noble truth of the way leading to the cessation of suffering that you and I have roamed and wandered through this long course of *samsâra*. That noble truth of suffering, *bhikkhus*, has been understood and penetrated. That noble truth of the origin of suffering has been understood and penetrated. That noble truth of the cessation of suffering has been understood and penetrated. That noble truth of the way leading to the cessation of suffering has been understood and penetrated. Craving for existence has been cut off; the conduit to existence has been destroyed; now there is no more renewed existence.”¹⁰⁸

According to the discourse *Abhisambuddha* of the *Sacca Samyutta* in *The Connected Discourses of the Buddha*, Our Buddha has clearly said that it was because of realizing these Four Noble Truths, that he is called *Samma Sambuddha*

The Four Noble Truths is the most excellent teaching of all the Buddhas, those in the past, those to come in the future, and during the time of Our Buddha up to the present day. This is why Venerable *Sâriputta*, in the “Great Discourse of the Simile of the Elephant's Footprint” said, “Friends, just as the footprint of any living being that walks can be placed within an elephant's footprint, and so the elephant's footprint is declared the chief of them because of its great size; so too, all wholesome states can be included in the Four Noble Truths.

In what four? In the noble truth of suffering, in the noble truth of the origin of suffering, in the noble truth of the cessation of suffering, and in the noble truth of the way leading to the cessation of suffering.”¹⁰⁷

Once, Our Buddha was dwelling at the place called *Kotigama* where he addressed his disciples and said, “*Bhikkhus*, it is because of not understanding and not penetrating the Four Noble Truths that you and I have roamed and wandered through this long course of *samsâra*. What four? It is, *bhikkhus*, because of not understanding and not penetrating the noble truth of suffering that you and I have roamed and wandered through this long course of *samsâra*. It is because of not understanding and not penetrating the noble truth of the origin of suffering ... the noble truth of the cessation of suffering ... the noble truth of the way leading to the cessation of suffering that you and I have roamed and wandered through this long course of *samsâra*. That noble truth of suffering, *bhikkhus*, has been understood and penetrated. That noble truth of the origin of suffering has been understood and penetrated. That noble truth of the cessation of suffering has been understood and penetrated. That noble truth of the way leading to the cessation of suffering has been understood and penetrated. Craving for existence has been cut off; the conduit to existence has been destroyed; now there is no more renewed existence.”¹⁰⁸

According to the discourse *Abhisambuddha* of the *Sacca Samyutta* in *The Connected Discourses of the Buddha*, Our Buddha has clearly said that it was because of realizing these Four Noble Truths, that he is called *Samma Sambuddha*

which means the Self-Awakened One or the Perfectly Enlightened One. “It is because he has fully awakened to these Four Noble Truths as they really are that the *Tathâgata* is called the *Arahant*, the Perfectly Enlightened One.”¹⁰⁹

In the *Friends* discourse of the same *Samyutta*, the Buddha said that if you really have compassion towards your friends or colleagues, relatives or kinsmen, you should exhort, settle, and establish them in making the breakthrough to the Four Noble Truths as they really are.¹¹⁰

In its nature, he who sees one of these Four Noble Truths sees the other three as well. One day, when the monks had returned from their alms round, after their meal they had assembled in the pavilion and were sitting together. Then, there a certain monk asked, “Friend, does one who see *dukkha* also see the origin of *dukkha*, also see the cessation of *dukkha*, also see the way leading to the cessation of *dukkha*?”

When this was said, the Venerable *Gavampati* said, “Friends, in the presence of the Blessed One I have heard and learned this: ‘*Bhikkhus*, one who sees *dukkha* also sees the origin of *dukkha*, also sees the cessation of *dukkha*, also sees the way leading to the cessation of *dukkha*. One who sees the origin of *dukkha* also sees *dukkha*, also sees the cessation of *dukkha*, also sees the way leading to the cessation of *dukkha*. One who sees the cessation of *dukkha* also sees *dukkha*, also sees the origin of *dukkha*, also sees the way leading to the cessation of *dukkha*. One who sees the way leading to the cessation of *dukkha* also sees *dukkha*, also sees the origin of *dukkha*, also sees the cessation of *dukkha*.’”¹¹¹

Once, while our supremely enlightened Buddha was dwelling in an acacia woods, he put some acacia leaves into his hand and showing them to his disciples said, “What do you think, monks, which is more numerous: these few acacia leaves that I have taken up in my hand or those in the acacia grove overhead?” Then the monks said, “Venerable sir, the acacia leaves that the Blessed One has taken up in his hand are few, but those in the acacia grove overhead are numerous.”

which means the Self-Awakened One or the Perfectly Enlightened One. “It is because he has fully awakened to these Four Noble Truths as they really are that the *Tathâgata* is called the *Arahant*, the Perfectly Enlightened One.”¹⁰⁹

In the *Friends* discourse of the same *Samyutta*, the Buddha said that if you really have compassion towards your friends or colleagues, relatives or kinsmen, you should exhort, settle, and establish them in making the breakthrough to the Four Noble Truths as they really are.¹¹⁰

In its nature, he who sees one of these Four Noble Truths sees the other three as well. One day, when the monks had returned from their alms round, after their meal they had assembled in the pavilion and were sitting together. Then, there a certain monk asked, “Friend, does one who see *dukkha* also see the origin of *dukkha*, also see the cessation of *dukkha*, also see the way leading to the cessation of *dukkha*?”

When this was said, the Venerable *Gavampati* said, “Friends, in the presence of the Blessed One I have heard and learned this: ‘*Bhikkhus*, one who sees *dukkha* also sees the origin of *dukkha*, also sees the cessation of *dukkha*, also sees the way leading to the cessation of *dukkha*. One who sees the origin of *dukkha* also sees *dukkha*, also sees the cessation of *dukkha*, also sees the way leading to the cessation of *dukkha*. One who sees the cessation of *dukkha* also sees *dukkha*, also sees the origin of *dukkha*, also sees the way leading to the cessation of *dukkha*. One who sees the way leading to the cessation of *dukkha* also sees *dukkha*, also sees the origin of *dukkha*, also sees the cessation of *dukkha*.’”¹¹¹

Once, while our supremely enlightened Buddha was dwelling in an acacia woods, he put some acacia leaves into his hand and showing them to his disciples said, “What do you think, monks, which is more numerous: these few acacia leaves that I have taken up in my hand or those in the acacia grove overhead?” Then the monks said, “Venerable sir, the acacia leaves that the Blessed One has taken up in his hand are few, but those in the acacia grove overhead are numerous.”

“So too, *bhikkhus*, the things I have directly known but have not taught you are numerous, while the things I have taught you are few. And why, *bhikkhus*, have I not taught those many things? Because they are unbeneficial, irrelevant to the fundamentals of the holy life, and do not lead to revulsion, to dispassion, to cessation, to peace, to direct knowledge, to enlightenment, to *Nibbāna*. Therefore, I have not taught them.

“And what, *bhikkhus*, have I taught? I have taught: This is *dukkha*; I have taught: This is the origin of *dukkha*; I have taught: This is the cessation of *dukkha*; I have taught: This is the way leading to the cessation of *dukkha*. And why, *bhikkhus*, have I taught this? Because this is beneficial, relevant to the fundamentals of the holy life, and leads to revulsion, to dispassion, to cessation, to peace, to direct knowledge, to enlightenment, to *Nibbāna*. Therefore, I have taught this.

Therefore, Our Buddha's kind admonition is this: “*Bhikkhus*, an exertion should be made to understand: This is *dukkha*. An exertion should be made to understand this is the origin of *dukkha*. An exertion should be made to understand this is the cessation of *dukkha*. And an exertion should be made to understand: This is the way leading to the cessation of *dukkha*.”¹²

Friends, suppose someone's clothes or head were ablaze! Then, what should be done? Once, Our Buddha asked his disciples this very question. Then, they said, “Bhante, Venerable sir, if one's clothes or head were ablaze, to extinguish one's blazing clothes or head one should arouse extraordinary desire, make an extraordinary effort, stir up zeal and enthusiasm, be unremitting, and exercise mindfulness and clear comprehension.” The Buddha then said.

“*Bhikkhus*, one might look on equanimously at one's blazing clothes or head, paying no attention to them, but so long as one has not made the breakthrough to the Four Noble Truths as they really are, in order to make the breakthrough one

“So too, *bhikkhus*, the things I have directly known but have not taught you are numerous, while the things I have taught you are few. And why, *bhikkhus*, have I not taught those many things? Because they are unbeneficial, irrelevant to the fundamentals of the holy life, and do not lead to revulsion, to dispassion, to cessation, to peace, to direct knowledge, to enlightenment, to *Nibbāna*. Therefore, I have not taught them.

“And what, *bhikkhus*, have I taught? I have taught: This is *dukkha*; I have taught: This is the origin of *dukkha*; I have taught: This is the cessation of *dukkha*; I have taught: This is the way leading to the cessation of *dukkha*. And why, *bhikkhus*, have I taught this? Because this is beneficial, relevant to the fundamentals of the holy life, and leads to revulsion, to dispassion, to cessation, to peace, to direct knowledge, to enlightenment, to *Nibbāna*. Therefore, I have taught this.

Therefore, Our Buddha's kind admonition is this: “*Bhikkhus*, an exertion should be made to understand: This is *dukkha*. An exertion should be made to understand this is the origin of *dukkha*. An exertion should be made to understand this is the cessation of *dukkha*. And an exertion should be made to understand: This is the way leading to the cessation of *dukkha*.”¹²

Friends, suppose someone's clothes or head were ablaze! Then, what should be done? Once, Our Buddha asked his disciples this very question. Then, they said, “Bhante, Venerable sir, if one's clothes or head were ablaze, to extinguish one's blazing clothes or head one should arouse extraordinary desire, make an extraordinary effort, stir up zeal and enthusiasm, be unremitting, and exercise mindfulness and clear comprehension.” The Buddha then said.

“*Bhikkhus*, one might look on equanimously at one's blazing clothes or head, paying no attention to them, but so long as one has not made the breakthrough to the Four Noble Truths as they really are, in order to make the breakthrough one

should arouse extraordinary desire, make an extraordinary effort, stir up zeal and enthusiasm, be unremitting, and exercise mindfulness and clear comprehension. What four? The noble truth of suffering ... the noble truth of the way leading to the cessation of suffering.”¹¹³

Now, suppose a person had collected all the grass, sticks, branches, twigs and foliage in this country and cut them all up and sharpened them as darts and impaled all the fish and creatures in the ocean! Which would be exhausted first; the fish in the ocean or the grass, sticks, branches, twigs and foliage in the woods? Once Our Buddha put this question to his disciples. Let us understand this story too. The Buddha says, “*Bhikkhus*, suppose, a man were to cut up whatever grass, sticks, branches, and foliage there is in this *Jambudipa* (India) and collect them into a single heap. Having done so, he would impale the large creatures in the ocean on the large stakes, the middle-sized creatures on the middle-sized stakes, and the small creatures on the small stakes. Still, *bhikkhus*, the gross creatures in the ocean would not be exhausted even after all the grass, sticks, branches, and foliage in *Jambudipa* had been used up and exhausted. The small creatures in the ocean that could not easily be impaled on stakes would be even more numerous than this. For what reason? Because of the minuteness of their bodies.

“So vast, *bhikkhus*, is the plane of misery. The person, who is accomplished in view, freed from that vast plane of misery, understands as it really is: This is *dukkha*. This is the origin of *dukkha*. This is the cessation of *dukkha* and this is the way leading to the cessation of *dukkha*.”¹¹⁴

Thus, the vastness of *dukkha* is like the vastness of the ocean. This is so profound. It is even beyond our range of contemplation. As Our Buddha has said, if one has right understanding, one can realize the Four Noble Truths, and such a person can completely be released from this animal realm of *dukkha*. Therefore, the most significant factor here for the realization of the Four Noble Truths is right understanding. According to the teaching of the Buddha, right understanding means the understanding of the Four

should arouse extraordinary desire, make an extraordinary effort, stir up zeal and enthusiasm, be unremitting, and exercise mindfulness and clear comprehension. What four? The noble truth of suffering ... the noble truth of the way leading to the cessation of suffering.”¹¹³

Now, suppose a person had collected all the grass, sticks, branches, twigs and foliage in this country and cut them all up and sharpened them as darts and impaled all the fish and creatures in the ocean! Which would be exhausted first; the fish in the ocean or the grass, sticks, branches, twigs and foliage in the woods? Once Our Buddha put this question to his disciples. Let us understand this story too. The Buddha says, “*Bhikkhus*, suppose, a man were to cut up whatever grass, sticks, branches, and foliage there is in this *Jambudipa* (India) and collect them into a single heap. Having done so, he would impale the large creatures in the ocean on the large stakes, the middle-sized creatures on the middle-sized stakes, and the small creatures on the small stakes. Still, *bhikkhus*, the gross creatures in the ocean would not be exhausted even after all the grass, sticks, branches, and foliage in *Jambudipa* had been used up and exhausted. The small creatures in the ocean that could not easily be impaled on stakes would be even more numerous than this. For what reason? Because of the minuteness of their bodies.

“So vast, *bhikkhus*, is the plane of misery. The person, who is accomplished in view, freed from that vast plane of misery, understands as it really is: This is *dukkha*. This is the origin of *dukkha*. This is the cessation of *dukkha* and this is the way leading to the cessation of *dukkha*.”¹¹⁴

Thus, the vastness of *dukkha* is like the vastness of the ocean. This is so profound. It is even beyond our range of contemplation. As Our Buddha has said, if one has right understanding, one can realize the Four Noble Truths, and such a person can completely be released from this animal realm of *dukkha*. Therefore, the most significant factor here for the realization of the Four Noble Truths is right understanding. According to the teaching of the Buddha, right understanding means the understanding of the Four

Noble Truths. That is the first step of the Noble Eightfold Path. The Buddha once said, “As the dawn is the precursor for the arising of the sun, right understanding is the precursor for the arising of the Four Noble Truths.”

Today, scientists talk about the black holes in space. However, most of us do not know that Our Buddha has talked about black holes 2600 years ago! Let us understand what the Buddha said. Here are his words, “*Bhikkhus*, there are world interstices, vacant and abysmal regions of blinding darkness and gloom, where the light of the sun and moon, so powerful and mighty, does not reach.” When this was said, a certain *bhikkhu* said to the Buddha: “That darkness, venerable sir, is indeed great; that darkness is indeed very great. But is there, venerable sir, any other darkness greater and more frightful than that one?”

“There is, *bhikkhu*,” The Buddha said. “But what, venerable sir, is that darkness greater and more frightful than that one?” the *bhikkhu* inquired. The Buddha then said, “Those ascetics and *brahmins*, *bhikkhu*, who do not understand as it really is: This is *dukkha*; who do not understand as it really is: This is the origin of *dukkha*; who do not understand as it really is: This is the cessation of *dukkha*; who do not understand as it really is: This is the way leading to the cessation of *dukkha*. They delight in volitional formations that lead to birth, in volitional formations that lead to aging, in volitional formations that lead to death, in volitional formations that lead to sorrow, lamentation, pain, displeasure, and despair. Delighting in such volitional formations, they generate volitional formations that lead to birth, generate volitional formations that lead to aging, generate volitional formations that lead to death, generate volitional formations that lead to sorrow, lamentation, pain, displeasure, and despair. Having generated such volitional formations, they tumble into the darkness of birth, tumble into the darkness of aging, tumble into the darkness of death, tumble into the darkness of sorrow, lamentation, pain, displeasure, and despair. They are not freed from birth, aging, and death; not freed from sorrow,

Noble Truths. That is the first step of the Noble Eightfold Path. The Buddha once said, “As the dawn is the precursor for the arising of the sun, right understanding is the precursor for the arising of the Four Noble Truths.”

Today, scientists talk about the black holes in space. However, most of us do not know that Our Buddha has talked about black holes 2600 years ago! Let us understand what the Buddha said. Here are his words, “*Bhikkhus*, there are world interstices, vacant and abysmal regions of blinding darkness and gloom, where the light of the sun and moon, so powerful and mighty, does not reach.” When this was said, a certain *bhikkhu* said to the Buddha: “That darkness, venerable sir, is indeed great; that darkness is indeed very great. But is there, venerable sir, any other darkness greater and more frightful than that one?”

“There is, *bhikkhu*,” The Buddha said. “But what, venerable sir, is that darkness greater and more frightful than that one?” the *bhikkhu* inquired. The Buddha then said, “Those ascetics and *brahmins*, *bhikkhu*, who do not understand as it really is: This is *dukkha*; who do not understand as it really is: This is the origin of *dukkha*; who do not understand as it really is: This is the cessation of *dukkha*; who do not understand as it really is: This is the way leading to the cessation of *dukkha*. They delight in volitional formations that lead to birth, in volitional formations that lead to aging, in volitional formations that lead to death, in volitional formations that lead to sorrow, lamentation, pain, displeasure, and despair. Delighting in such volitional formations, they generate volitional formations that lead to birth, generate volitional formations that lead to aging, generate volitional formations that lead to death, generate volitional formations that lead to sorrow, lamentation, pain, displeasure, and despair. Having generated such volitional formations, they tumble into the darkness of birth, tumble into the darkness of aging, tumble into the darkness of death, tumble into the darkness of sorrow, lamentation, pain, displeasure, and despair. They are not freed from birth, aging, and death; not freed from sorrow,

lamentation, pain, displeasure, and despair; not freed from suffering, I say.

“But, *bhikkhu*, those ascetics and *brahmins* who understand as it really is: This is *dukkha*... This is the way leading to the cessation of *dukkha*. They do not delight in volitional formations that lead to birth, nor in volitional formations that lead to aging, nor in volitional formations that lead to death, nor in volitional formations that lead to sorrow, lamentation, pain, displeasure, and despair. Not delighting in such volitional formations, they do not generate volitional formations that lead to birth, nor generate volitional formations that lead to aging, nor generate volitional formations that lead to death, nor generate volitional formations that lead to sorrow, lamentation, pain, displeasure, and despair. Not having generated such volitional formations, they do not tumble into the darkness of birth, nor tumble into the darkness of aging, nor tumble into the darkness of death, nor tumble into the darkness of sorrow, lamentation, pain, displeasure, and despair. They are freed from birth, aging, and death; freed from sorrow, lamentation, pain, displeasure, and despair; freed from suffering, I say.”¹¹⁵

The following may be quite familiar to you. Even as a child, you may have heard of this story, or perhaps a different version. This is the real word of the Buddha. It is the story of how the blind (one eyed) turtle sees the sky through the hole of the yoke. The Buddha says, “*Bhikkhus*, suppose a man would throw a yoke with a single hole into the great ocean, and there was a blind turtle which would come to the surface once every hundred years. What do you think, *bhikkhus*, would that blind turtle, coming to the surface once every hundred years, insert its neck into that yoke with a single hole?” The Buddha asked this question from his disciples. They then said.

“If it would ever do so, venerable sir, it would be only after a very long time.” The Buddha then said. “Sooner, I say, would that blind turtle, coming to the surface once every hundred years, insert its neck into that yoke with a single hole than the

lamentation, pain, displeasure, and despair; not freed from suffering, I say.

“But, *bhikkhu*, those ascetics and *brahmins* who understand as it really is: This is *dukkha*... This is the way leading to the cessation of *dukkha*. They do not delight in volitional formations that lead to birth, nor in volitional formations that lead to aging, nor in volitional formations that lead to death, nor in volitional formations that lead to sorrow, lamentation, pain, displeasure, and despair. Not delighting in such volitional formations, they do not generate volitional formations that lead to birth, nor generate volitional formations that lead to aging, nor generate volitional formations that lead to death, nor generate volitional formations that lead to sorrow, lamentation, pain, displeasure, and despair. Not having generated such volitional formations, they do not tumble into the darkness of birth, nor tumble into the darkness of aging, nor tumble into the darkness of death, nor tumble into the darkness of sorrow, lamentation, pain, displeasure, and despair. They are freed from birth, aging, and death; freed from sorrow, lamentation, pain, displeasure, and despair; freed from suffering, I say.”¹¹⁵

The following may be quite familiar to you. Even as a child, you may have heard of this story, or perhaps a different version. This is the real word of the Buddha. It is the story of how the blind (one eyed) turtle sees the sky through the hole of the yoke. The Buddha says, “*Bhikkhus*, suppose a man would throw a yoke with a single hole into the great ocean, and there was a blind turtle which would come to the surface once every hundred years. What do you think, *bhikkhus*, would that blind turtle, coming to the surface once every hundred years, insert its neck into that yoke with a single hole?” The Buddha asked this question from his disciples. They then said.

“If it would ever do so, venerable sir, it would be only after a very long time.” The Buddha then said. “Sooner, I say, would that blind turtle, coming to the surface once every hundred years, insert its neck into that yoke with a single hole than the

fool who has gone once to the nether world [would regain] the human state. For what reason? Because here, *bhikkhus*, there is no conduct guided by the Dhamma, no righteous conduct, no wholesome activity, no meritorious activity. Here, there prevails mutual devouring, the devouring of the weak. For what reason? Because, *bhikkhus*, they have not seen the Four Noble Truths. What four? The noble truth of *dukkha* ... the noble truth of the way leading to the cessation of *dukkha*.”¹¹⁶

One day, while teaching the Dhamma in a yard, the Buddha got some soil on his fingernail and showing that to his disciples said, “*Bhikkhus*, what do you think: which is more: the little bit of soil that I have taken up on my fingernail or this great earth?”

The monks said, “Venerable sir, the great earth is more. The little bit of soil that the Blessed One has taken up on his fingernail is trifling. Compared to the great earth, that little bit of soil is not calculable, does not bear comparison, does not amount even to a fraction.”

The Buddha then declared, “So too, *bhikkhus*, for a noble disciple, a person accomplished in view who has made the breakthrough, the *dukkha* that has been destroyed and eliminated is more, while that which remains is trifling. Compared to the former mass of *dukkha* that has been destroyed and eliminated, the latter is not calculable, does not bear comparison, does not amount even to a fraction, as there is a maximum of seven more lives. He is one who understands as it really is: This is *dukkha* ... This is the way leading to the cessation of *dukkha*.”¹¹⁷

Our Supreme Buddha says, “*Bhikkhus*, suppose there were a pond fifty *yojanas* (one *yojana* is equal to seven miles) long, fifty *yojanas* wide, and fifty *yojanas* deep, full of water, overflowing so that a crow could drink sitting on the bank of it, and a man would draw out some water from it on the tip of a blade of *kusa* grass. What do you think, *bhikkhus*, which is more: the water drawn out on the tip of the blade of *kusa* grass or the water in the pond?”

fool who has gone once to the nether world [would regain] the human state. For what reason? Because here, *bhikkhus*, there is no conduct guided by the Dhamma, no righteous conduct, no wholesome activity, no meritorious activity. Here, there prevails mutual devouring, the devouring of the weak. For what reason? Because, *bhikkhus*, they have not seen the Four Noble Truths. What four? The noble truth of *dukkha* ... the noble truth of the way leading to the cessation of *dukkha*.”¹¹⁶

One day, while teaching the Dhamma in a yard, the Buddha got some soil on his fingernail and showing that to his disciples said, “*Bhikkhus*, what do you think: which is more: the little bit of soil that I have taken up on my fingernail or this great earth?”

The monks said, “Venerable sir, the great earth is more. The little bit of soil that the Blessed One has taken up on his fingernail is trifling. Compared to the great earth, that little bit of soil is not calculable, does not bear comparison, does not amount even to a fraction.”

The Buddha then declared, “So too, *bhikkhus*, for a noble disciple, a person accomplished in view who has made the breakthrough, the *dukkha* that has been destroyed and eliminated is more, while that which remains is trifling. Compared to the former mass of *dukkha* that has been destroyed and eliminated, the latter is not calculable, does not bear comparison, does not amount even to a fraction, as there is a maximum of seven more lives. He is one who understands as it really is: This is *dukkha* ... This is the way leading to the cessation of *dukkha*.”¹¹⁷

Our Supreme Buddha says, “*Bhikkhus*, suppose there were a pond fifty *yojanas* (one *yojana* is equal to seven miles) long, fifty *yojanas* wide, and fifty *yojanas* deep, full of water, overflowing so that a crow could drink sitting on the bank of it, and a man would draw out some water from it on the tip of a blade of *kusa* grass. What do you think, *bhikkhus*, which is more: the water drawn out on the tip of the blade of *kusa* grass or the water in the pond?”

The monks said, “Venerable sir, the water in the pond is more. The water drawn out on the tip of the blade of *kusa* grass is trifling. Compared to the water in the pond, the water drawn out on the tip of the blade of *kusa* grass is not calculable, does not bear comparison, does not amount even to a fraction.”

“So too, *bhikkhus*, for a noble disciple, a person accomplished in view who has made the breakthrough, the *dukkha* that has been destroyed and eliminated is more, while that which remains is trifling. Compared to the former mass of *dukkha* that has been destroyed and eliminated, the latter is not calculable, does not bear comparison, does not amount even to a fraction, as there is a maximum of seven more lives. He is one who understands as it really is: This is *dukkha* ... This is the way leading to the cessation of *dukkha*.”¹¹⁸

“*Bhikkhus*,” the Buddha addressed the monks, and said, “Suppose” that a man would place on the Himâlayas, the king of mountains, seven grains of gravel the size of mustard seeds. What do you think, *bhikkhus*, which is more: the seven grains of gravel the size of mustard seeds that have been placed there or the Himalayas, the king of mountains?”

“Venerable sir, the Himâlayas, the king of mountains, is more. The seven grains of gravel the size of mustard seeds are trifling. Compared to the Himâlayas, the king of mountains, the seven grains of gravel the size of mustard seeds are not calculable, do not bear comparison, do not amount even to a fraction.”

“So too, *bhikkhus*, for a noble disciple, a person accomplished in view who has made the breakthrough, the *dukkha* that has been destroyed and eliminated is more, while that which remains is trifling. Compared to the former mass of *dukkha* that has been destroyed and eliminated, the latter is not calculable, does not bear comparison, does not amount even to a fraction, as there is a maximum of seven more lives. He is one who understands as it really is: This is *dukkha* ... This is the way leading to the cessation of *dukkha*.”¹¹⁹

“Suppose, Monks,” the Buddha says, “The Himâlayas, the king of mountains, would be destroyed and eliminated except

The monks said, “Venerable sir, the water in the pond is more. The water drawn out on the tip of the blade of *kusa* grass is trifling. Compared to the water in the pond, the water drawn out on the tip of the blade of *kusa* grass is not calculable, does not bear comparison, does not amount even to a fraction.”

“So too, *bhikkhus*, for a noble disciple, a person accomplished in view who has made the breakthrough, the *dukkha* that has been destroyed and eliminated is more, while that which remains is trifling. Compared to the former mass of *dukkha* that has been destroyed and eliminated, the latter is not calculable, does not bear comparison, does not amount even to a fraction, as there is a maximum of seven more lives. He is one who understands as it really is: This is *dukkha* ... This is the way leading to the cessation of *dukkha*.”¹¹⁸

“*Bhikkhus*,” the Buddha addressed the monks, and said, “Suppose” that a man would place on the Himâlayas, the king of mountains, seven grains of gravel the size of mustard seeds. What do you think, *bhikkhus*, which is more: the seven grains of gravel the size of mustard seeds that have been placed there or the Himalayas, the king of mountains?”

“Venerable sir, the Himâlayas, the king of mountains, is more. The seven grains of gravel the size of mustard seeds are trifling. Compared to the Himâlayas, the king of mountains, the seven grains of gravel the size of mustard seeds are not calculable, do not bear comparison, do not amount even to a fraction.”

“So too, *bhikkhus*, for a noble disciple, a person accomplished in view who has made the breakthrough, the *dukkha* that has been destroyed and eliminated is more, while that which remains is trifling. Compared to the former mass of *dukkha* that has been destroyed and eliminated, the latter is not calculable, does not bear comparison, does not amount even to a fraction, as there is a maximum of seven more lives. He is one who understands as it really is: This is *dukkha* ... This is the way leading to the cessation of *dukkha*.”¹¹⁹

“Suppose, Monks,” the Buddha says, “The Himâlayas, the king of mountains, would be destroyed and eliminated except

for seven grains of gravel the size of mustard seeds. What do you think, *bhikkhus*, which is more: the portion of the Himâlayas, the king of mountains, that has been destroyed and eliminated or the seven grains of gravel the size of mustard seeds that remain?”

The monks then said, “Venerable sir, the portion of the Himalayas, the king of mountains, that has been destroyed and eliminated is more. The seven grains of gravel the size of mustard seeds that remain are trifling. Compared to the portion of the Himalayas, the king of mountains, that has been destroyed and eliminated, the seven grains of gravel the size of mustard seeds that remain are not calculable, do not bear comparison, do not amount even to a fraction.”

“So too, *bhikkhus*, for a noble disciple, a person accomplished in view who has made the breakthrough, the *dukkha* that has been destroyed and eliminated is more, while that which remains is trifling. Compared to the former mass of *dukkha* that has been destroyed and eliminated, the latter is not calculable, does not bear comparison, does not amount even to a fraction, as there is a maximum of seven more lives. He is one who understands as it really is: This is *dukkha* ... This is the way leading to the cessation of *dukkha*.”¹²⁰

Our Supreme Buddha has taught us the significance of realizing the Four Noble Truths on many different occasions. There is no Buddhism without the Four Noble Truths. He who knows the Four Noble Truths knows right understanding. He who has right understanding enters the path and follows right intention, right speech, right action, right livelihood, right effort, right mindfulness, right concentration, right knowledge and right liberation respectively. This is the right path to liberation. Whoever follows this path ends up with right liberation. All other paths are paths to many other goals

The Noble Eightfold Path

This is the special path realized by our Supreme Buddha Gotama. This is called the Middle Path since it avoids extremes. Our Buddha delivered his maiden discourse at the

for seven grains of gravel the size of mustard seeds. What do you think, *bhikkhus*, which is more: the portion of the Himâlayas, the king of mountains, that has been destroyed and eliminated or the seven grains of gravel the size of mustard seeds that remain?”

The monks then said, “Venerable sir, the portion of the Himalayas, the king of mountains, that has been destroyed and eliminated is more. The seven grains of gravel the size of mustard seeds that remain are trifling. Compared to the portion of the Himalayas, the king of mountains, that has been destroyed and eliminated, the seven grains of gravel the size of mustard seeds that remain are not calculable, do not bear comparison, do not amount even to a fraction.”

“So too, *bhikkhus*, for a noble disciple, a person accomplished in view who has made the breakthrough, the *dukkha* that has been destroyed and eliminated is more, while that which remains is trifling. Compared to the former mass of *dukkha* that has been destroyed and eliminated, the latter is not calculable, does not bear comparison, does not amount even to a fraction, as there is a maximum of seven more lives. He is one who understands as it really is: This is *dukkha* ... This is the way leading to the cessation of *dukkha*.”¹²⁰

Our Supreme Buddha has taught us the significance of realizing the Four Noble Truths on many different occasions. There is no Buddhism without the Four Noble Truths. He who knows the Four Noble Truths knows right understanding. He who has right understanding enters the path and follows right intention, right speech, right action, right livelihood, right effort, right mindfulness, right concentration, right knowledge and right liberation respectively. This is the right path to liberation. Whoever follows this path ends up with right liberation. All other paths are paths to many other goals

The Noble Eightfold Path

This is the special path realized by our Supreme Buddha Gotama. This is called the Middle Path since it avoids extremes. Our Buddha delivered his maiden discourse at the

place called *Isipatana Migadâya* in *Vârânasi*, two months after his attainment of enlightenment. Addressing the five ascetics he said, “Monks these two extremes should not be followed by the monks.” Those two extremes are: sensual indulgence and self-mortification. Thus, he introduced the Middle Path by avoiding these two extremes of life. That Middle Path is the Noble Eightfold Path that brings forth the eye of the Dhamma, knowledge, peace, true knowledge, enlightenment, and *Nibbâna*.

This path constitutes eight factors. Therefore, it is called an eightfold path. The eight factors are as follows:

1. Right understanding
2. Right intention
3. Right speech
4. Right action
5. Right livelihood
6. Right effort
7. Right mindfulness
8. Right concentration

As the Buddha clearly said, this path is the path for trainees (*sekha's* path). There are three kinds of trainees: stream enterers, once returners, and non-returners. For the attainment of enlightenment, one has to develop two more factors of the path and complete the path as the tenfold path.

According to the discourse of *The Great Forty (Mahâ Cattârisaka)* in *The Middle Length Sayings of the Buddha*, Our Buddha very clearly said that the eightfold path is the path for trainees and the tenfold path is the path for the enlightened ones. This discourse is of great significance for the understanding of the Noble Eightfold Path. In this special discourse the Buddha explains right concentration. It is a very rare thing, impossible to find in other religious teachings throughout history or today. That right concentration is gained only with the support of the first seven factors of the Noble Eightfold Path. Therefore, can we find the Noble Eightfold Path any where else?

place called *Isipatana Migadâya* in *Vârânasi*, two months after his attainment of enlightenment. Addressing the five ascetics he said, “Monks these two extremes should not be followed by the monks.” Those two extremes are: sensual indulgence and self-mortification. Thus, he introduced the Middle Path by avoiding these two extremes of life. That Middle Path is the Noble Eightfold Path that brings forth the eye of the Dhamma, knowledge, peace, true knowledge, enlightenment, and *Nibbâna*.

This path constitutes eight factors. Therefore, it is called an eightfold path. The eight factors are as follows:

1. Right understanding
2. Right intention
3. Right speech
4. Right action
5. Right livelihood
6. Right effort
7. Right mindfulness
8. Right concentration

As the Buddha clearly said, this path is the path for trainees (*sekha's* path). There are three kinds of trainees: stream enterers, once returners, and non-returners. For the attainment of enlightenment, one has to develop two more factors of the path and complete the path as the tenfold path.

According to the discourse of *The Great Forty (Mahâ Cattârisaka)* in *The Middle Length Sayings of the Buddha*, Our Buddha very clearly said that the eightfold path is the path for trainees and the tenfold path is the path for the enlightened ones. This discourse is of great significance for the understanding of the Noble Eightfold Path. In this special discourse the Buddha explains right concentration. It is a very rare thing, impossible to find in other religious teachings throughout history or today. That right concentration is gained only with the support of the first seven factors of the Noble Eightfold Path. Therefore, can we find the Noble Eightfold Path any where else?

This means, that to gain right concentration, one has to develop and fulfill the seven factors of the path from right understanding to right mindfulness. The Buddha said, “*Bhikkhus*, I shall teach you noble right concentration with its supports and its requisites. Listen and attend closely to what I shall say.” “Yes, venerable sir,” the *bhikkhus* replied. The Blessed One said: “What, *bhikkhus*, is noble right concentration with its supports and its requisites, that is, right view, right intention, right speech, right action, right livelihood, right effort, and right mindfulness? Unification of mind equipped with these seven factors is called noble right concentration with its supports and its requisites.”¹²¹

In the same discourse, there are other very important points. They are how right understanding, or right view, right effort, and right mindfulness are interconnected or interdependent and how they follow each other as in a circle or triangle for the realization of the Dhamma. The Buddha says, “Monks, one makes an effort to abandon wrong view and to enter upon right view: this is one's right effort. Mindfully one abandons wrong view, mindfully one enters upon and abides in right view: this is one's right mindfulness. Thus, these three states support and circle around right view, that is, right view, right effort, and right mindfulness.”

In the *Right View* discourse of *The Middle Length Sayings of the Buddha*, the Venerable *Sâriputta* provides a great illustration of the interconnectedness of the Four Noble Truths, Dependent Origination, and the Noble Eightfold Path. That was an amazing and unparalleled presentation by Venerable *Sâriputta*. Venerable *Sâriputta* beautifully shows the connection of the Four Noble Truths to all the twelve links of Dependent Origination. The most fascinating thing is the revelation of the interconnectedness of ignorance and taints. They are interdependent and they are the things to go last in our efforts to achieve the goal of liberation.¹²²

The Noble Eightfold Path is the path that all the Buddhas follow for the realization of *Nibbâna*. Our Buddha once said that this path is an ancient path traveled upon by people in the

This means, that to gain right concentration, one has to develop and fulfill the seven factors of the path from right understanding to right mindfulness. The Buddha said, “*Bhikkhus*, I shall teach you noble right concentration with its supports and its requisites. Listen and attend closely to what I shall say.” “Yes, venerable sir,” the *bhikkhus* replied. The Blessed One said: “What, *bhikkhus*, is noble right concentration with its supports and its requisites, that is, right view, right intention, right speech, right action, right livelihood, right effort, and right mindfulness? Unification of mind equipped with these seven factors is called noble right concentration with its supports and its requisites.”¹²¹

In the same discourse, there are other very important points. They are how right understanding, or right view, right effort, and right mindfulness are interconnected or interdependent and how they follow each other as in a circle or triangle for the realization of the Dhamma. The Buddha says, “Monks, one makes an effort to abandon wrong view and to enter upon right view: this is one's right effort. Mindfully one abandons wrong view, mindfully one enters upon and abides in right view: this is one's right mindfulness. Thus, these three states support and circle around right view, that is, right view, right effort, and right mindfulness.”

In the *Right View* discourse of *The Middle Length Sayings of the Buddha*, the Venerable *Sâriputta* provides a great illustration of the interconnectedness of the Four Noble Truths, Dependent Origination, and the Noble Eightfold Path. That was an amazing and unparalleled presentation by Venerable *Sâriputta*. Venerable *Sâriputta* beautifully shows the connection of the Four Noble Truths to all the twelve links of Dependent Origination. The most fascinating thing is the revelation of the interconnectedness of ignorance and taints. They are interdependent and they are the things to go last in our efforts to achieve the goal of liberation.¹²²

The Noble Eightfold Path is the path that all the Buddhas follow for the realization of *Nibbâna*. Our Buddha once said that this path is an ancient path traveled upon by people in the

past, which headed to an ancient city. Our Buddha, giving a simile of the city says, “Suppose, *bhikkhus*, a man wandering through a forest would see an ancient path, an ancient road traveled upon by people in the past. He would follow it and would see an ancient city, an ancient capital that had been inhabited by people in the past, with parks, groves, ponds, and ramparts, a delightful place. Then, the man would inform the king or a royal minister: 'Sire, know that while wandering through the forest I saw an ancient path, an ancient road traveled upon by people in the past. I followed it and saw an ancient city, an ancient capital that had been inhabited by people in the past, with parks, groves, ponds, and ramparts, a delightful place. Renovate that city, sire!' Then, the king or the royal minister would renovate the city, and some time later that city would become successful and prosperous, well populated, filled with people, attained to growth and expansion.

“So too, *bhikkhus*, I saw the ancient path, the ancient road traveled by the Perfectly Enlightened Ones of the past. And what is that ancient path, that ancient road? It is just this Noble Eightfold Path; that is, right view, right intention, right speech, right action, right livelihood, right effort, right mindfulness, right concentration.”¹²³

One day when Venerable *Ananda* met the Buddha he asked, “Is it possible, Venerable sir, to point out a divine vehicle in this Dhamma and Discipline?” The Buddha then said, “It is possible *Ananda*.” Further the Buddha said, “This is a designation for this Noble Eightfold Path: 'The Divine Vehicle' and 'The Vehicle of Dhamma' and 'The Unsurpassed Victory in Battle.' Right view, *Ananda*, when developed and cultivated, has as its final goal the removal of lust, the removal of hatred, the removal of delusion. Right intention ... Right concentration, when developed and cultivated, has as its final goal the removal of lust, the removal of hatred, the removal of delusion.”¹²⁴

In accordance with the Bhikkhu Sutta of *The Connected Discourses of the Buddha*, this Noble Eightfold Path has been

past, which headed to an ancient city. Our Buddha, giving a simile of the city says, “Suppose, *bhikkhus*, a man wandering through a forest would see an ancient path, an ancient road traveled upon by people in the past. He would follow it and would see an ancient city, an ancient capital that had been inhabited by people in the past, with parks, groves, ponds, and ramparts, a delightful place. Then, the man would inform the king or a royal minister: 'Sire, know that while wandering through the forest I saw an ancient path, an ancient road traveled upon by people in the past. I followed it and saw an ancient city, an ancient capital that had been inhabited by people in the past, with parks, groves, ponds, and ramparts, a delightful place. Renovate that city, sire!' Then, the king or the royal minister would renovate the city, and some time later that city would become successful and prosperous, well populated, filled with people, attained to growth and expansion.

“So too, *bhikkhus*, I saw the ancient path, the ancient road traveled by the Perfectly Enlightened Ones of the past. And what is that ancient path, that ancient road? It is just this Noble Eightfold Path; that is, right view, right intention, right speech, right action, right livelihood, right effort, right mindfulness, right concentration.”¹²³

One day when Venerable *Ananda* met the Buddha he asked, “Is it possible, Venerable sir, to point out a divine vehicle in this Dhamma and Discipline?” The Buddha then said, “It is possible *Ananda*.” Further the Buddha said, “This is a designation for this Noble Eightfold Path: 'The Divine Vehicle' and 'The Vehicle of Dhamma' and 'The Unsurpassed Victory in Battle.' Right view, *Ananda*, when developed and cultivated, has as its final goal the removal of lust, the removal of hatred, the removal of delusion. Right intention ... Right concentration, when developed and cultivated, has as its final goal the removal of lust, the removal of hatred, the removal of delusion.”¹²⁴

In accordance with the Bhikkhu Sutta of *The Connected Discourses of the Buddha*, this Noble Eightfold Path has been

declared as the “holy life.” According to that discourse, a certain *bhikkhu* went to the Buddha and asked, “Bhante, 'holy life, holy life' is said, what is this 'holy life'? And what is the final goal of the holy life?” Thereupon the Buddha said, “This Noble Eightfold Path, *bhikkhu*, is the holy life; that is right view... right concentration. The destruction of lust, the destruction of hatred, the destruction of delusion: this is the final goal of the holy life.”¹²⁵

In the *Anupada Sutta* of *The Connected Discourses of the Buddha*, the Buddha says, “*Bhikkhus*, if wanderers of other sects ask you: 'For what purpose, friends, is the holy life lived under the ascetic Gotama?' Being asked thus, you should answer them thus: 'It is, friends, for the sake of final *Nibbâna* without clinging that the holy life is lived under the Blessed One.'

“Then, *bhikkhus*, if the wanderers of other sects ask you: 'But, friends, is there a path, is there a way for attaining final *Nibbâna* without clinging?' Being asked thus, you should answer them thus: 'There is a path, friends, there is a way for attaining final *Nibbâna* without clinging.’

“And what, *bhikkhus*, is that path, what is that way for attaining final *Nibbâna* without clinging? It is this Noble Eightfold Path; that is, right view ... right concentration. This is the path; this is the way for attaining final *Nibbâna* without clinging. Being asked thus, *bhikkhus*, you should answer those wanderers of other sects in such a way.”¹²⁶

As the discourses *Knowledge and Vision*, *Taints*, and *Fruits of Liberation* in the same *Samyutta (Maggā)* of *The Connected Discourses of the Buddha*, Our Buddha clearly points out the Noble Eightfold Path itself is the path for the realization of different kinds of knowledge, for the destruction of all taints, and for the realization of complete liberation.

In the *Ogha Sutta* of the *Samyutta Nikaya*, Our Buddha emphasized the need for practicing and developing the Noble Eightfold Path for the purpose of direct knowledge of the five lower fetters, for the full understanding of them, for their utter

declared as the “holy life.” According to that discourse, a certain *bhikkhu* went to the Buddha and asked, “Bhante, 'holy life, holy life' is said, what is this 'holy life'? And what is the final goal of the holy life?” Thereupon the Buddha said, “This Noble Eightfold Path, *bhikkhu*, is the holy life; that is right view... right concentration. The destruction of lust, the destruction of hatred, the destruction of delusion: this is the final goal of the holy life.”¹²⁵

In the *Anupada Sutta* of *The Connected Discourses of the Buddha*, the Buddha says, “*Bhikkhus*, if wanderers of other sects ask you: 'For what purpose, friends, is the holy life lived under the ascetic Gotama?' Being asked thus, you should answer them thus: 'It is, friends, for the sake of final *Nibbâna* without clinging that the holy life is lived under the Blessed One.'

“Then, *bhikkhus*, if the wanderers of other sects ask you: 'But, friends, is there a path, is there a way for attaining final *Nibbâna* without clinging?' Being asked thus, you should answer them thus: 'There is a path, friends, there is a way for attaining final *Nibbâna* without clinging.’

“And what, *bhikkhus*, is that path, what is that way for attaining final *Nibbâna* without clinging? It is this Noble Eightfold Path; that is, right view ... right concentration. This is the path; this is the way for attaining final *Nibbâna* without clinging. Being asked thus, *bhikkhus*, you should answer those wanderers of other sects in such a way.”¹²⁶

As the discourses *Knowledge and Vision*, *Taints*, and *Fruits of Liberation* in the same *Samyutta (Maggā)* of *The Connected Discourses of the Buddha*, Our Buddha clearly points out the Noble Eightfold Path itself is the path for the realization of different kinds of knowledge, for the destruction of all taints, and for the realization of complete liberation.

In the *Ogha Sutta* of the *Samyutta Nikaya*, Our Buddha emphasized the need for practicing and developing the Noble Eightfold Path for the purpose of direct knowledge of the five lower fetters, for the full understanding of them, for their utter

destruction and for their abandoning.¹²⁷ If one would completely cut off these five lower fetters, one would attain the state of non-returner by realizing the states of stream enterer and once returner as well. Thus, he / she would be a person who never comes to this *samsâric* journey again.

Similarly, the Noble Eightfold Path is the path for the destruction of the higher fetters as well. Our Buddha explains this in the discourse *Higher Fetters* in the *Magga Samyutta*¹²⁸ as follows.

“*Bhikkhus*, there are these five higher fetters. What five? Lust for form, lust for the formless, conceit, restlessness, and ignorance. These are the five higher fetters. The Noble Eightfold Path is to be developed for direct knowledge of these five higher fetters, for the full understanding of them, for their utter destruction, for their abandoning.

“What Noble Eightfold Path? Here, *bhikkhus*, a *bhikkhu* develops right view ... right concentration, which is based upon seclusion, dispassion, and cessation, maturing in release. This Noble Eightfold Path is to be developed for direct knowledge of these five higher fetters, for the full understanding of them, for their utter destruction, for their abandoning.”

According to the teaching of Our Supreme Buddha, if one would completely cut off all these ten fetters, one would certainly cut off all *dukkha* and attain the supreme bliss of *Nibbâna*.

In accordance with this, let us understand the significance of practicing and developing the Noble Eightfold Path as an indispensable factor for the right liberation. Let us strive to practice and develop these factors of the path one by one starting today. Since the Noble Eightfold Path leads to *Nibbâna*, it is called ‘the path to *Nibbâna*’. From the time of the Buddha to the present, whoever has attained the different stages of holy life, such as stream entry, once returner, non-returner, or *arahantship* has followed this Noble Eightfold Path. Whoever follows this Path can realize the completion of

destruction and for their abandoning.¹²⁷ If one would completely cut off these five lower fetters, one would attain the state of non-returner by realizing the states of stream enterer and once returner as well. Thus, he / she would be a person who never comes to this *samsâric* journey again.

Similarly, the Noble Eightfold Path is the path for the destruction of the higher fetters as well. Our Buddha explains this in the discourse *Higher Fetters* in the *Magga Samyutta*¹²⁸ as follows.

“*Bhikkhus*, there are these five higher fetters. What five? Lust for form, lust for the formless, conceit, restlessness, and ignorance. These are the five higher fetters. The Noble Eightfold Path is to be developed for direct knowledge of these five higher fetters, for the full understanding of them, for their utter destruction, for their abandoning.

“What Noble Eightfold Path? Here, *bhikkhus*, a *bhikkhu* develops right view ... right concentration, which is based upon seclusion, dispassion, and cessation, maturing in release. This Noble Eightfold Path is to be developed for direct knowledge of these five higher fetters, for the full understanding of them, for their utter destruction, for their abandoning.”

According to the teaching of Our Supreme Buddha, if one would completely cut off all these ten fetters, one would certainly cut off all *dukkha* and attain the supreme bliss of *Nibbâna*.

In accordance with this, let us understand the significance of practicing and developing the Noble Eightfold Path as an indispensable factor for the right liberation. Let us strive to practice and develop these factors of the path one by one starting today. Since the Noble Eightfold Path leads to *Nibbâna*, it is called ‘the path to *Nibbâna*’. From the time of the Buddha to the present, whoever has attained the different stages of holy life, such as stream entry, once returner, non-returner, or *arahantship* has followed this Noble Eightfold Path. Whoever follows this Path can realize the completion of

the Tenfold Path and the attainment of *arahantship*. As Our Buddha has taught us very clearly, we all have that ability, that power. Therefore, let us understand the word of the Buddha and follow his word devotedly and wisely. Let us practice and engage in the teachings of the Buddha in our daily life.

Let us now understand the nature of that peaceful, featureless, and luminous mind of the Enlightened Ones who have completely cut off all defilements, never to be born in this world again. What is the meaning of the complete destruction of all attachment and the attainment of *Nibbâna*?

the Tenfold Path and the attainment of *arahantship*. As Our Buddha has taught us very clearly, we all have that ability, that power. Therefore, let us understand the word of the Buddha and follow his word devotedly and wisely. Let us practice and engage in the teachings of the Buddha in our daily life.

Let us now understand the nature of that peaceful, featureless, and luminous mind of the Enlightened Ones who have completely cut off all defilements, never to be born in this world again. What is the meaning of the complete destruction of all attachment and the attainment of *Nibbâna*?

Chapter 5

Nibbâna and the Great Parinibbâna of our Supreme Buddha

When one comes to the state of hungerlessness, coolness, complete cessation of all defilements and the purity of mind or the state of unconditionality, that state is called *Nibbâna*. Since there is a blazing fire all the time within and without, extinguishing the fire and coming to coolness (*sitibhûta*) is necessary. This constant blazing is the blazing of defilements. As Our Buddha realized this clearly, he said that all those who are wandering in *samsâra* without understanding the beginning of this *samsâra*, hindered by ignorance, and fettered by craving, are blazing with eleven kinds of fire.¹²⁹ That is *dukkha*.

Once, the Buddha said, “All are burning.” The Buddha said this in the *Adittapariyâya Sutta*, which was delivered to the three *Kassapa* brothers. They were ascetics followed by their own groups of disciples. The Buddha went to meet them at *Uruvela* after his first sermon and addressed them. As well-known and highly venerated ascetics, at first, they were not ready to listen to the Buddha. Not only ascetics, they themselves were teachers. However, the Buddha tamed them with his compassionate words of Dhamma and finally the Buddha taught them this particular sermon well known as the *Fire Sermon*. They all eventually became disciples of the Buddha.

On that day, addressing the thousand monks, the Buddha said, “*Bhikkhus*, all is burning. And what, *bhikkhus*, is the all that is burning? The eye is burning, forms are burning, eye-consciousness is burning, eye-contact is burning, and whatever feeling arises with eye-contact as condition whether pleasant or painful or neither-painful-nor-pleasant that too is burning. Burning with what? Burning with the fire of **lust**, with the fire of **hatred**, with the fire of **delusion**; burning with

Chapter 5

Nibbâna and the Great Parinibbâna of our Supreme Buddha

When one comes to the state of hungerlessness, coolness, complete cessation of all defilements and the purity of mind or the state of unconditionality, that state is called *Nibbâna*. Since there is a blazing fire all the time within and without, extinguishing the fire and coming to coolness (*sitibhûta*) is necessary. This constant blazing is the blazing of defilements. As Our Buddha realized this clearly, he said that all those who are wandering in *samsâra* without understanding the beginning of this *samsâra*, hindered by ignorance, and fettered by craving, are blazing with eleven kinds of fire.¹²⁹ That is *dukkha*.

Once, the Buddha said, “All are burning.” The Buddha said this in the *Adittapariyâya Sutta*, which was delivered to the three *Kassapa* brothers. They were ascetics followed by their own groups of disciples. The Buddha went to meet them at *Uruvela* after his first sermon and addressed them. As well-known and highly venerated ascetics, at first, they were not ready to listen to the Buddha. Not only ascetics, they themselves were teachers. However, the Buddha tamed them with his compassionate words of Dhamma and finally the Buddha taught them this particular sermon well known as the *Fire Sermon*. They all eventually became disciples of the Buddha.

On that day, addressing the thousand monks, the Buddha said, “*Bhikkhus*, all is burning. And what, *bhikkhus*, is the all that is burning? The eye is burning, forms are burning, eye-consciousness is burning, eye-contact is burning, and whatever feeling arises with eye-contact as condition whether pleasant or painful or neither-painful-nor-pleasant that too is burning. Burning with what? Burning with the fire of **lust**, with the fire of **hatred**, with the fire of **delusion**; burning with

birth, aging, and death; with sorrow, lamentation, pain, displeasure, and despair, I say.

“The ear is burning ... The mind is burning ... and whatever feeling arises with mind-contact as condition whether pleasant or painful or neither-painful-nor-pleasant that too is burning. Burning with what? Burning with the fire of lust, with the fire of hatred, with the fire of delusion; burning with birth, aging, and death; with sorrow, lamentation, pain, displeasure, and despair, I say.

“Seeing thus, *bhikkhus*, the instructed noble disciple experiences revulsion towards the eye, towards forms, towards eye-consciousness, towards eye-contact, towards whatever feeling arises with eye-contact as condition whether pleasant or painful or neither-painful-nor-pleasant; experiences revulsion towards the ear ... towards the mind ... towards whatever feeling arises with mind-contact as condition.... Experiencing revulsion, he becomes dispassionate. Through dispassion [his mind] is liberated. When it is liberated there comes the knowledge: 'It's liberated.' He understands: 'Destroyed is birth, the holy life has been lived, what had to be done has been done, there is no more for this state of being.’”

This is what Our Buddha said. Elated, those *bhikkhus* delighted in the Buddha's statement. While this discourse was being spoken, the minds of the thousand *bhikkhus* were liberated from the taints by non-clinging. The one who completely extinguished these fires is the enlightened one. Once the fire is no more, it becomes cool. That is the coolness according to the teachings of the Buddha and the disciples of the Buddha. From time to time, we come across the phrase “*sitibhutosmi nibbuto*” in the texts, which means, "I came to the state of coolness and extinguished."¹³⁰

If we analyze seven terms frequently found in the discourses, we can better understand the nature of the minds of those who have become Enlightened Ones. Let's take a closer look at the following terms: *khināsa*, *antimadehadhāri*, *katakkicco*,

birth, aging, and death; with sorrow, lamentation, pain, displeasure, and despair, I say.

“The ear is burning ... The mind is burning ... and whatever feeling arises with mind-contact as condition whether pleasant or painful or neither-painful-nor-pleasant that too is burning. Burning with what? Burning with the fire of lust, with the fire of hatred, with the fire of delusion; burning with birth, aging, and death; with sorrow, lamentation, pain, displeasure, and despair, I say.

“Seeing thus, *bhikkhus*, the instructed noble disciple experiences revulsion towards the eye, towards forms, towards eye-consciousness, towards eye-contact, towards whatever feeling arises with eye-contact as condition whether pleasant or painful or neither-painful-nor-pleasant; experiences revulsion towards the ear ... towards the mind ... towards whatever feeling arises with mind-contact as condition.... Experiencing revulsion, he becomes dispassionate. Through dispassion [his mind] is liberated. When it is liberated there comes the knowledge: 'It's liberated.' He understands: 'Destroyed is birth, the holy life has been lived, what had to be done has been done, there is no more for this state of being.’”

This is what Our Buddha said. Elated, those *bhikkhus* delighted in the Buddha's statement. While this discourse was being spoken, the minds of the thousand *bhikkhus* were liberated from the taints by non-clinging. The one who completely extinguished these fires is the enlightened one. Once the fire is no more, it becomes cool. That is the coolness according to the teachings of the Buddha and the disciples of the Buddha. From time to time, we come across the phrase “*sitibhutosmi nibbuto*” in the texts, which means, "I came to the state of coolness and extinguished."¹³⁰

If we analyze seven terms frequently found in the discourses, we can better understand the nature of the minds of those who have become Enlightened Ones. Let's take a closer look at the following terms: *khināsa*, *antimadehadhāri*, *katakkicco*,

vijitasamgâma, ohitabhâro, anuppattasadattho, and bhava bandhanacchido.

However, first we must realize that through understanding these terms, we still cannot understand the real nature of an Enlightened One. The enlightened mind is completely different from the mind of a worldly person. Our attempt here is to understand, to a limited extent, the nature of their personality.

The first term is *khînâsava*. Here, *khîna* means destruction and *asava* means taints. Therefore, it means the one who has completely destroyed taints. The second term is *antimadehadhari*. This is a compound term of three parts. Here, the *antima* means last, *deha* means body, and *dhâri* means bearing or holding. That means the one who holds the last body. An Enlightened One is experiencing his final body; never to be born again. The next term is *katakkicca*. Here, *kata* means done and *kkicca* means what is to be done. Therefore, it means done what had to be done. The Enlightened One has done what had to be done. There is nothing more to be done by him. The next term is *vijitasamgâma*. Here *vijita* means victorious, *samgâma* means battle. Therefore, the Enlightened One has won the battle with defilements. For him, there is no more battle to fight. The next term is *ohitabhâro*. Here, *ohita* means kept aside or thrown away. *Bhara* means burden. Therefore, this means the one who has thrown his burden aside. That burden is the burden of the five aggregates affected by clinging. In *The Connected Discourses of the Buddha*, there is a discourse named *Bhara* that means burden.¹³¹ The term *anuppattasadattha* is made up of *anuppatta* that means approached and *sadattha* means enlightenment. This means the one who has attained enlightenment and dwells in it. The last term considered here is *bhavabandhanacchido*. This is a compound term of three parts: *bhava*, plus *bandhana* plus *chido*. Here, *bhava* means *samsâra* or existence; *bandhana* means fetters, and *chida* means cut. Therefore, it means the one who has destroyed or cut off all *samsâric* fetters or fetters for existence.

vijitasamgâma, ohitabhâro, anuppattasadattho, and bhava bandhanacchido.

However, first we must realize that through understanding these terms, we still cannot understand the real nature of an Enlightened One. The enlightened mind is completely different from the mind of a worldly person. Our attempt here is to understand, to a limited extent, the nature of their personality.

The first term is *khînâsava*. Here, *khîna* means destruction and *asava* means taints. Therefore, it means the one who has completely destroyed taints. The second term is *antimadehadhari*. This is a compound term of three parts. Here, the *antima* means last, *deha* means body, and *dhâri* means bearing or holding. That means the one who holds the last body. An Enlightened One is experiencing his final body; never to be born again. The next term is *katakkicca*. Here, *kata* means done and *kkicca* means what is to be done. Therefore, it means done what had to be done. The Enlightened One has done what had to be done. There is nothing more to be done by him. The next term is *vijitasamgâma*. Here *vijita* means victorious, *samgâma* means battle. Therefore, the Enlightened One has won the battle with defilements. For him, there is no more battle to fight. The next term is *ohitabhâro*. Here, *ohita* means kept aside or thrown away. *Bhara* means burden. Therefore, this means the one who has thrown his burden aside. That burden is the burden of the five aggregates affected by clinging. In *The Connected Discourses of the Buddha*, there is a discourse named *Bhara* that means burden.¹³¹ The term *anuppattasadattha* is made up of *anuppatta* that means approached and *sadattha* means enlightenment. This means the one who has attained enlightenment and dwells in it. The last term considered here is *bhavabandhanacchido*. This is a compound term of three parts: *bhava*, plus *bandhana* plus *chido*. Here, *bhava* means *samsâra* or existence; *bandhana* means fetters, and *chida* means cut. Therefore, it means the one who has destroyed or cut off all *samsâric* fetters or fetters for existence.

Now, through these terms, we can better understand even for a limited extent, the nature of these Enlightened Ones.

When we refer to some texts such as the *Dhammapada*, we can find wonderful and excellent verses that describe the nature of the Enlightened Ones. Especially, in the *Dhammapada*, there is a full chapter titled *Arahanta Vagga* that gives a very good explanation of the nature of the enlightened mind. It is composed of ten different verses. Similarly, we come across more verses from the *Bhikkhu Vagga* (No.25) and the *Brâhmana Vagga* (No.26) as well. The *Theragâtha* and *Therigâtha* (verses of brethren and sisters) are other well-known sources of rich inspiration. They are great utterances of the Enlightened Ones.

In the *Sutta Nipâta*, we can find many different verses that illustrate the great virtues of the Enlightened Ones.

Let us look at some verses from the *Dhammapada* to strive to understand the nature of these Enlightened Ones.

In the *Dhammapada*, referring to the Enlightened Ones, Our Buddha says, “For one who has completed the *samsâric* journey has no fever of passion, free from sorrow and liberated in all ways, is released from all bonds. They are mindful and exert themselves, not attached to any home, like swans that abandon the lake; they leave home after home behind. They do not accumulate and are wise and judicious with their food. Their field is the freedom of emptiness and signlessness. Like the path of birds in the sky, it is hard to trace their path.

They are like the earth, untroubled, well practiced, like a pillar of Indra, and like a lake without mud. They are calm in mind, speech and action, and released through right understanding. Such persons are fully at peace. In village, in forest, in low land, in high land, wherever they dwell, delightful is that place.” Those passages are from the *Arahanta Vagga* of the *Dhammapada*.

Let us see these beautiful expressions of the Buddha from the *Brâhmana Vagga* of the *Dhammapada*.

Now, through these terms, we can better understand even for a limited extent, the nature of these Enlightened Ones.

When we refer to some texts such as the *Dhammapada*, we can find wonderful and excellent verses that describe the nature of the Enlightened Ones. Especially, in the *Dhammapada*, there is a full chapter titled *Arahanta Vagga* that gives a very good explanation of the nature of the enlightened mind. It is composed of ten different verses. Similarly, we come across more verses from the *Bhikkhu Vagga* (No.25) and the *Brâhmana Vagga* (No.26) as well. The *Theragâtha* and *Therigâtha* (verses of brethren and sisters) are other well-known sources of rich inspiration. They are great utterances of the Enlightened Ones.

In the *Sutta Nipâta*, we can find many different verses that illustrate the great virtues of the Enlightened Ones.

Let us look at some verses from the *Dhammapada* to strive to understand the nature of these Enlightened Ones.

In the *Dhammapada*, referring to the Enlightened Ones, Our Buddha says, “For one who has completed the *samsâric* journey has no fever of passion, free from sorrow and liberated in all ways, is released from all bonds. They are mindful and exert themselves, not attached to any home, like swans that abandon the lake; they leave home after home behind. They do not accumulate and are wise and judicious with their food. Their field is the freedom of emptiness and signlessness. Like the path of birds in the sky, it is hard to trace their path.

They are like the earth, untroubled, well practiced, like a pillar of Indra, and like a lake without mud. They are calm in mind, speech and action, and released through right understanding. Such persons are fully at peace. In village, in forest, in low land, in high land, wherever they dwell, delightful is that place.” Those passages are from the *Arahanta Vagga* of the *Dhammapada*.

Let us see these beautiful expressions of the Buddha from the *Brâhmana Vagga* of the *Dhammapada*.

“He who has cut off the thong (of hatred), the band (of craving), and the rope (of false views), together with the appurtenances (latent evil tendencies), he who has removed the crossbar (of ignorance) and is enlightened, him do I call a holy man.

“He who has neither this shore nor the other shore, nor yet both, he who is free of cares and is unfettered, him do I call a holy man.

“He whose lust and hatred, pride and hypocrisy have fallen off like a mustard seed from the point of a needle, him do I call a holy man.

“He who has profound knowledge, who is wise, skilled in discerning the right or wrong path, and has reached the highest goal, him do I call a holy man.

“He has completely cut off all defilements. His mind is neither attached to anything nor non-attached from anything. He is neither clinging to anything nor non-clinging to anything. He neither clings to passion nor clings to non-passion. He has desire neither to this world nor to the next world. He clings to nothing of the past, present and future, and has no attachment and holds on to nothing. He is a holy man, an Enlightened One.”

According to the discourse *Khajjaniya* in *The Connected Discourses of the Buddha*, he is a great being who has known and seen. The Buddha says, “Therefore, *bhikkhus*, any kind of form whatsoever ... Any kind of feeling whatsoever ... Any kind of perception whatsoever ... Any kind of volitional formations whatsoever ... Any kind of consciousness whatsoever, whether past, future, or present, internal or external, gross or subtle, inferior or superior, far or near, all consciousness should be seen as it really is with correct wisdom thus: ‘This is not mine, this I am not, this is not my self.’

“Seeing thus, *bhikkhus*, the instructed noble disciple experiences revulsion towards form, revulsion towards feeling, revulsion towards perception, revulsion towards

“He who has cut off the thong (of hatred), the band (of craving), and the rope (of false views), together with the appurtenances (latent evil tendencies), he who has removed the crossbar (of ignorance) and is enlightened, him do I call a holy man.

“He who has neither this shore nor the other shore, nor yet both, he who is free of cares and is unfettered, him do I call a holy man.

“He whose lust and hatred, pride and hypocrisy have fallen off like a mustard seed from the point of a needle, him do I call a holy man.

“He who has profound knowledge, who is wise, skilled in discerning the right or wrong path, and has reached the highest goal, him do I call a holy man.

“He has completely cut off all defilements. His mind is neither attached to anything nor non-attached from anything. He is neither clinging to anything nor non-clinging to anything. He neither clings to passion nor clings to non-passion. He has desire neither to this world nor to the next world. He clings to nothing of the past, present and future, and has no attachment and holds on to nothing. He is a holy man, an Enlightened One.”

According to the discourse *Khajjaniya* in *The Connected Discourses of the Buddha*, he is a great being who has known and seen. The Buddha says, “Therefore, *bhikkhus*, any kind of form whatsoever ... Any kind of feeling whatsoever ... Any kind of perception whatsoever ... Any kind of volitional formations whatsoever ... Any kind of consciousness whatsoever, whether past, future, or present, internal or external, gross or subtle, inferior or superior, far or near, all consciousness should be seen as it really is with correct wisdom thus: ‘This is not mine, this I am not, this is not my self.’

“Seeing thus, *bhikkhus*, the instructed noble disciple experiences revulsion towards form, revulsion towards feeling, revulsion towards perception, revulsion towards

volitional formations, revulsion towards consciousness. Experiencing revulsion, he becomes dispassionate. Through dispassion [his mind] is liberated. When it is liberated there comes the knowledge: 'It's liberated.' He understands: 'Destroyed is birth, the holy life has been lived, what had to be done has been done, there is no more for this state of being.'"¹³²

Towards the end of the well-known *Jewel Discourse* of the Buddha, we read a beautiful stanza, which illustrates the characteristics of Enlightened Ones. So beautiful! Let us read it in the original *Pāli* first.

*Khīnam purāṇam navam natthi sambhavam
Viratta citta āyatike bhavassmim
Te khīna bījā avirulhicchanda
Nibbanti dhîrâ yathâ yampadipo.*

(Their past is extinct with no new arising,
Their minds not drawn to future birth.
Their old seeds destroyed, their desires no
more growing,
The wise go out just like this lamp.)¹³³

One becomes an Enlightened One with the purification of consciousness. In order to define what we call mind, the vital energy in the five aggregates of existence, Our Supreme Buddha used three different terms: *citta*, *mano* and *viññāna*. Of these three terms, after one attains enlightenment, we do not talk about his or her *citta* or *mano*, but of *viññāna* (consciousness).

Generally speaking, we all have six kinds of consciousness (*viññāna*). They are eye-consciousness, ear-consciousness, nose-consciousness, tongue-consciousness, body-consciousness, and mind-consciousness. Since the great enlightened ones have completely cut off all emotions they have become free from the state of *citta* or consciousness, which we refer to as the emotional aspect of mind. (Though we find three different terms in *Pāli* to define mind, unfortunately, we do not have three separate terms in English to understand the different aspects of the mind. We use only

volitional formations, revulsion towards consciousness. Experiencing revulsion, he becomes dispassionate. Through dispassion [his mind] is liberated. When it is liberated there comes the knowledge: 'It's liberated.' He understands: 'Destroyed is birth, the holy life has been lived, what had to be done has been done, there is no more for this state of being.'"¹³²

Towards the end of the well-known *Jewel Discourse* of the Buddha, we read a beautiful stanza, which illustrates the characteristics of Enlightened Ones. So beautiful! Let us read it in the original *Pāli* first.

*Khīnam purāṇam navam natthi sambhavam
Viratta citta āyatike bhavassmim
Te khīna bījā avirulhicchanda
Nibbanti dhîrâ yathâ yampadipo.*

(Their past is extinct with no new arising,
Their minds not drawn to future birth.
Their old seeds destroyed, their desires no
more growing,
The wise go out just like this lamp.)¹³³

One becomes an Enlightened One with the purification of consciousness. In order to define what we call mind, the vital energy in the five aggregates of existence, Our Supreme Buddha used three different terms: *citta*, *mano* and *viññāna*. Of these three terms, after one attains enlightenment, we do not talk about his or her *citta* or *mano*, but of *viññāna* (consciousness).

Generally speaking, we all have six kinds of consciousness (*viññāna*). They are eye-consciousness, ear-consciousness, nose-consciousness, tongue-consciousness, body-consciousness, and mind-consciousness. Since the great enlightened ones have completely cut off all emotions they have become free from the state of *citta* or consciousness, which we refer to as the emotional aspect of mind. (Though we find three different terms in *Pāli* to define mind, unfortunately, we do not have three separate terms in English to understand the different aspects of the mind. We use only

consciousness and mind for all the three. For both *citta* and *viññâna*, we have to use the term consciousness.)

An Enlightened One's consciousness is even not the state of mind or memory. It is certainly beyond the state of simple memory. His consciousness is not limited to mere memory. That is certainly a state of luminous consciousness. *Mano* or mind is the intellectual aspect of mind, which reminds us of things and leads to all actions. The Buddha said, "Mind is the forerunner of all actions." (*Mano pubbangamâ dhammâ.*) The memory of the Enlightened One is a memory or mindfulness that has been developed and cultivated as a faculty. That is the faculty of mindfulness. If needed, not only things about this life, but even from previous lives can be recalled through that faculty of mindfulness.

Normally, Enlightened Ones do not see or observe something through memory. Since they observe things objectively, they can see things animate or inanimate without any discrimination. In other words, they have no measurements or conceit (*mâna*). Since they see things with mindfulness and clear comprehension, their skillfulness of perception is immense. Their view is panoramic. As ordinary humans, we see things and have a perception, which is only a normal perception. Then, what really happens is, we see what we think that we see. That is what we call 'perception' according to our worldly interpretation. For this purpose, we should have at least an understanding of the relationship between the internal bases and the external bases and their respective consciousness.

That relationship is built by consciousness. The meeting of the three is called 'contact' (*tinnam sangati phasso*).

It is because of this contact, that feeling arises. What one feels, one perceives, is the teaching of the Buddha. This is very clearly given in the discourse titled *Honey Ball in The Middle Length Sayings of the Buddha*.¹³⁴

However, the perception of a great Enlightened One is entirely different from that of a worldly person. His vast

consciousness and mind for all the three. For both *citta* and *viññâna*, we have to use the term consciousness.)

An Enlightened One's consciousness is even not the state of mind or memory. It is certainly beyond the state of simple memory. His consciousness is not limited to mere memory. That is certainly a state of luminous consciousness. *Mano* or mind is the intellectual aspect of mind, which reminds us of things and leads to all actions. The Buddha said, "Mind is the forerunner of all actions." (*Mano pubbangamâ dhammâ.*) The memory of the Enlightened One is a memory or mindfulness that has been developed and cultivated as a faculty. That is the faculty of mindfulness. If needed, not only things about this life, but even from previous lives can be recalled through that faculty of mindfulness.

Normally, Enlightened Ones do not see or observe something through memory. Since they observe things objectively, they can see things animate or inanimate without any discrimination. In other words, they have no measurements or conceit (*mâna*). Since they see things with mindfulness and clear comprehension, their skillfulness of perception is immense. Their view is panoramic. As ordinary humans, we see things and have a perception, which is only a normal perception. Then, what really happens is, we see what we think that we see. That is what we call 'perception' according to our worldly interpretation. For this purpose, we should have at least an understanding of the relationship between the internal bases and the external bases and their respective consciousness.

That relationship is built by consciousness. The meeting of the three is called 'contact' (*tinnam sangati phasso*).

It is because of this contact, that feeling arises. What one feels, one perceives, is the teaching of the Buddha. This is very clearly given in the discourse titled *Honey Ball in The Middle Length Sayings of the Buddha*.¹³⁴

However, the perception of a great Enlightened One is entirely different from that of a worldly person. His vast

knowledge is not knowledge merely acquired through memory, through sense impingement, or even collected from external sources as an intellectual game, but an experiential wisdom gained through profound wisdom. That is a realization, which could be gained only through insight meditation, which is again superior to the other two methods of gaining wisdom. They are respectively received wisdom and reflective wisdom.

As long as the Enlightened One is alive, he has consciousness. However, there is no attachment to physicality or mentality in that consciousness. Like a perfectly clear mirror, the mind of an Enlightened One is clear, not obscured by the dust of physicality and mentality.

After his passing away, that consciousness never enters another womb to be born as a being. That is what is said in the Loving Friendliness discourse (*Karaniya metta Sutta*) as “*Nahi jātu gabbha seyyam punareti.*”¹³⁵

Beings are born again and again in *samsāra* because of consciousness. However, consciousness never travels or transmigrates alone from one birth to another as a permanent entity. This is a wrong conception, a pernicious view. In the time of the Buddha, this is exactly what a monk named *Sāti* said. According to the *Mahā Tanhā Sankhaya Sutta*, he said, “As I understand the Dhamma taught by the Blessed One, it is this same consciousness that runs and wanders through the round of rebirths, not another.”¹³⁶

However, Our Supreme Buddha never taught the concept of a permanent consciousness. As he says, consciousness itself is interdependent and it depends on physicality and mentality (*nāmarupa*). In accordance with that teaching of the Buddha, where there is no consciousness, there is no physicality and mentality, and where there is no mentality and physicality, there is no consciousness. In other words, they exist interdependently (*nāmarupa paccayā viññānam viññāna paccayā nāmarupam*).

Thus, consciousness transmigrates [if the term is used] only together with physicality and mentality. Consciousness is led

knowledge is not knowledge merely acquired through memory, through sense impingement, or even collected from external sources as an intellectual game, but an experiential wisdom gained through profound wisdom. That is a realization, which could be gained only through insight meditation, which is again superior to the other two methods of gaining wisdom. They are respectively received wisdom and reflective wisdom.

As long as the Enlightened One is alive, he has consciousness. However, there is no attachment to physicality or mentality in that consciousness. Like a perfectly clear mirror, the mind of an Enlightened One is clear, not obscured by the dust of physicality and mentality.

After his passing away, that consciousness never enters another womb to be born as a being. That is what is said in the Loving Friendliness discourse (*Karaniya metta Sutta*) as “*Nahi jātu gabbha seyyam punareti.*”¹³⁵

Beings are born again and again in *samsāra* because of consciousness. However, consciousness never travels or transmigrates alone from one birth to another as a permanent entity. This is a wrong conception, a pernicious view. In the time of the Buddha, this is exactly what a monk named *Sāti* said. According to the *Mahā Tanhā Sankhaya Sutta*, he said, “As I understand the Dhamma taught by the Blessed One, it is this same consciousness that runs and wanders through the round of rebirths, not another.”¹³⁶

However, Our Supreme Buddha never taught the concept of a permanent consciousness. As he says, consciousness itself is interdependent and it depends on physicality and mentality (*nāmarupa*). In accordance with that teaching of the Buddha, where there is no consciousness, there is no physicality and mentality, and where there is no mentality and physicality, there is no consciousness. In other words, they exist interdependently (*nāmarupa paccayā viññānam viññāna paccayā nāmarupam*).

Thus, consciousness transmigrates [if the term is used] only together with physicality and mentality. Consciousness is led

by our intentional actions (*karma*). What we called *bhava* or existence which means an opportunity to reap the results of our intentional or volitional actions. *Bhava* or existence comes to be because of attachment. Forget about a permanent thing; our consciousness does not exist for even a fraction of a second without changing. It is a rapidly changing vital energy, which is the fastest energy in the world. Hence, it's faster even than the speed of light, but consciousness itself is interdependent. Once both physicality and mentality of consciousness are removed through meditation, consciousness is infinite (*anantam*) and starts to be luminous, then luminates all over (*sabbato pabham*). That luminous consciousness is the consciousness of the Enlightened One. (Luminosity and purity)

It is like the lamp, which has no more oil, but the lamp is still burning because of the wick. Since there is no physicality and mentality, there is no chance for consciousness to continue its existence; therefore, it also becomes extinct. However, as there is still some energy of the aggregates, including consciousness [simply the five aggregates exist] while an Enlightened One is living. His consciousness is luminous. With the passing away of a great Enlightened One, his consciousness also ceases within (which is called complete coolness within). At the time of death, consciousness has no place to cling to; therefore, there is no place to be reborn.

As Our Buddha points out clearly in the *Dvayatânupassana Sutta* of the *Sutta Nipâta*, “Every form of suffering grows out of consciousness. By the cessation of consciousness no more suffering is produced. Consider this harmful consequence of consciousness that it is the basis of suffering. But once consciousness is quietened, a person's craving ends, and total calmness is realized.”

(*Yam kinci dukkham sambhoti
Sabbam viññâna paccayâ
Viññânassa nirodhena
Natthi dukkhassa sambhavam.*)¹³⁷

According to this statement of the Buddha, it is clear that even

by our intentional actions (*karma*). What we called *bhava* or existence which means an opportunity to reap the results of our intentional or volitional actions. *Bhava* or existence comes to be because of attachment. Forget about a permanent thing; our consciousness does not exist for even a fraction of a second without changing. It is a rapidly changing vital energy, which is the fastest energy in the world. Hence, it's faster even than the speed of light, but consciousness itself is interdependent. Once both physicality and mentality of consciousness are removed through meditation, consciousness is infinite (*anantam*) and starts to be luminous, then luminates all over (*sabbato pabham*). That luminous consciousness is the consciousness of the Enlightened One. (Luminosity and purity)

It is like the lamp, which has no more oil, but the lamp is still burning because of the wick. Since there is no physicality and mentality, there is no chance for consciousness to continue its existence; therefore, it also becomes extinct. However, as there is still some energy of the aggregates, including consciousness [simply the five aggregates exist] while an Enlightened One is living. His consciousness is luminous. With the passing away of a great Enlightened One, his consciousness also ceases within (which is called complete coolness within). At the time of death, consciousness has no place to cling to; therefore, there is no place to be reborn.

As Our Buddha points out clearly in the *Dvayatânupassana Sutta* of the *Sutta Nipâta*, “Every form of suffering grows out of consciousness. By the cessation of consciousness no more suffering is produced. Consider this harmful consequence of consciousness that it is the basis of suffering. But once consciousness is quietened, a person's craving ends, and total calmness is realized.”

(*Yam kinci dukkham sambhoti
Sabbam viññâna paccayâ
Viññânassa nirodhena
Natthi dukkhassa sambhavam.*)¹³⁷

According to this statement of the Buddha, it is clear that even

consciousness itself is harmful for us. That was why once the Buddha compared this consciousness to a magician. Basically, there are two kinds of consciousness.

1. Established or settled consciousness
(patitthita viññāna)
2. Unestablished or unsettled consciousness
(appatitthita viññāna)

Established consciousness is the consciousness of unenlightened persons. That is called established because it is established or based on physicality and mentality. The Buddha said dependent on physicality and mentality, consciousness arises. In the above passage, we talked about how dependent on consciousness, physicality and mentality come to be. This is also true that in accordance with the Buddha's teaching on dependent origination, they exist interdependently. That is how a *samsâric* circle is formed as a whirlpool or vortex. People in some traditions believe this consciousness transmigrates or reaches to any place alone. Our Buddha clearly presented this wonderful teaching in the *Seeds* discourse in *The Connected Discourses of the Buddha*. The Buddha said, “*Bhikkhus*, though someone might say: 'Apart from form, apart from feeling, apart from perception, apart from volitional formations, I will make known the coming and going of consciousness, its passing away and rebirth, its growth, increase, and expansion' that is impossible.”¹³⁸

On the other hand, unestablished consciousness is the consciousness of the Enlightened One. Since there is no place for that consciousness to establish or base on, it is called *appatitthita* or 'unestablished' consciousness. The base or establishmet here means both physicality and mentality. Thus, there should not be physicality and mentality in the Enlightened One's mind. As long as there is physicality and mentality, there comes renewal of existence. The Enlightened One's consciousness or mind is an unconditioned mind (*visankhâragatam cittam*). In the *Kevaddha Sutta* of the *Digha Nikaya*, we find a very specific phrase to denote that luminous mind of the Enlightened One. That term is

consciousness itself is harmful for us. That was why once the Buddha compared this consciousness to a magician. Basically, there are two kinds of consciousness.

1. Established or settled consciousness
(patitthita viññāna)
2. Unestablished or unsettled consciousness
(appatitthita viññāna)

Established consciousness is the consciousness of unenlightened persons. That is called established because it is established or based on physicality and mentality. The Buddha said dependent on physicality and mentality, consciousness arises. In the above passage, we talked about how dependent on consciousness, physicality and mentality come to be. This is also true that in accordance with the Buddha's teaching on dependent origination, they exist interdependently. That is how a *samsâric* circle is formed as a whirlpool or vortex. People in some traditions believe this consciousness transmigrates or reaches to any place alone. Our Buddha clearly presented this wonderful teaching in the *Seeds* discourse in *The Connected Discourses of the Buddha*. The Buddha said, “*Bhikkhus*, though someone might say: 'Apart from form, apart from feeling, apart from perception, apart from volitional formations, I will make known the coming and going of consciousness, its passing away and rebirth, its growth, increase, and expansion' that is impossible.”¹³⁸

On the other hand, unestablished consciousness is the consciousness of the Enlightened One. Since there is no place for that consciousness to establish or base on, it is called *appatitthita* or 'unestablished' consciousness. The base or establishmet here means both physicality and mentality. Thus, there should not be physicality and mentality in the Enlightened One's mind. As long as there is physicality and mentality, there comes renewal of existence. The Enlightened One's consciousness or mind is an unconditioned mind (*visankhâragatam cittam*). In the *Kevaddha Sutta* of the *Digha Nikaya*, we find a very specific phrase to denote that luminous mind of the Enlightened One. That term is

anidassana viññâna which means featureless consciousness. There are no features like long, short, earth, water, fire, and air in that consciousness.

Anidassana Viññâna

The Enlightened One's mind is called not simply 'mind' or 'consciousness' but featureless consciousness. In this consciousness, there is nothing to be depicted as this or that. Since there is no example and no features at all, it is called featureless consciousness (*anidassana viññâna*).

Today, we talk about this not because of our knowledge or experience, but because of the knowledge and experiential wisdom that Our Supreme Buddha has shared with us. Now, let us strive to understand this profound revelation of Our Buddha in accordance with one of his original discourses from *The Long Discourses of the Buddha (Digha Nikâya)*. The name of this discourse is *Kevaddha Sutta*.

This discourse is of utmost important for the illustration of the Enlightened One's consciousness. Our Buddha delivered this discourse to a householder named *Kevaddha*. When he visited the Buddha he said, “Venerable sir, this *Nâlânda* is rich, prosperous, populous, and full of people who have faith in the Blessed One. It would be well if the Blessed One were to cause a monk to perform superhuman feats and miracles. In this way *Nâlânda* would come to have even more faith in the Blessed One.” Then the Buddha said, “*Kevaddha*, this is not the way I teach Dhamma to the monks, by saying, “Go, monks, and perform superhuman feats and miracles for the white-clothed lay-people!” Towards the end of this discourse, the Buddha recited this following interesting stanza.

*Viññânam anidassanam- Anantam sabbato
pabham
Ettha âpo ca pathavi tejo vâyo na gâdhati
Ettha dîghan ca rassan ca anum thulam
subhâsubham
Ettha nâmam ca rūpam ca asesam uparujjhati
Viññânassa nirodhena etthetâ uparujjhati.*

anidassana viññâna which means featureless consciousness. There are no features like long, short, earth, water, fire, and air in that consciousness.

Anidassana Viññâna

The Enlightened One's mind is called not simply 'mind' or 'consciousness' but featureless consciousness. In this consciousness, there is nothing to be depicted as this or that. Since there is no example and no features at all, it is called featureless consciousness (*anidassana viññâna*).

Today, we talk about this not because of our knowledge or experience, but because of the knowledge and experiential wisdom that Our Supreme Buddha has shared with us. Now, let us strive to understand this profound revelation of Our Buddha in accordance with one of his original discourses from *The Long Discourses of the Buddha (Digha Nikâya)*. The name of this discourse is *Kevaddha Sutta*.

This discourse is of utmost important for the illustration of the Enlightened One's consciousness. Our Buddha delivered this discourse to a householder named *Kevaddha*. When he visited the Buddha he said, “Venerable sir, this *Nâlânda* is rich, prosperous, populous, and full of people who have faith in the Blessed One. It would be well if the Blessed One were to cause a monk to perform superhuman feats and miracles. In this way *Nâlânda* would come to have even more faith in the Blessed One.” Then the Buddha said, “*Kevaddha*, this is not the way I teach Dhamma to the monks, by saying, “Go, monks, and perform superhuman feats and miracles for the white-clothed lay-people!” Towards the end of this discourse, the Buddha recited this following interesting stanza.

*Viññânam anidassanam- Anantam sabbato
pabham
Ettha âpo ca pathavi tejo vâyo na gâdhati
Ettha dîghan ca rassan ca anum thulam
subhâsubham
Ettha nâmam ca rūpam ca asesam uparujjhati
Viññânassa nirodhena etthetâ uparujjhati.*

(Consciousness without feature, without end,
luminous all around: Here water, earth, fire, &
wind have no footing. Here long & short coarse &
fine fair & foul name & form are all brought to an
end. With the cessation of [the activity of]
consciousness each is here brought to an end.)

This was the answer given by the Buddha to a question asked by a certain monk. There is a fascinating story about this monk. While he was meditating, he started to think [thinking is not the Buddha's meditation], "I wonder where the four great elements the earth element, the water element, the fire element, the air element cease without remainder?" He then went to the different *devâ* realms from the first one to the sixth one, but he could not get the answer. Then, he went to all sixteen Brahma worlds and finally met the Brahma who claimed he was the creator. "Monk, I am Brahma, Great Brahma, the Conqueror, the Unconquered, the All-seeing, All-powerful, the Lord, the Master and Creator, the Ruler, Appointer and Orderer, Father of All that have been and shall be." However, that was not the answer to the question the monk asked. According to the story, finally the Brahma took that monk by his arm, led him aside and said, "Monk, these *devâs* believe there is nothing Brahma does not see, there is nothing he does not know, there is nothing he is unaware of. That is why I did not speak in front of them. But, monk, I don't know where the four great elements cease without remainder. And therefore, monk, you have acted wrongly, you have acted incorrectly by going beyond the Blessed Lord and going in search of an answer to this question elsewhere. Now, monk, you just go to the Blessed Lord and put this question to him, and whatever answer he gives, accept it."

Thereupon, the monk came to the Buddha and asked, "Lord, where do the four great elements cease without remainder?" Our Buddha then said, "Monk, once upon a time seafaring merchants, when they set sail on the ocean, took in their ship a land-sighting bird. When they could not see the land themselves they released this bird. The bird flew to the east, to the south, to the west, to the north; it flew to the zenith and to

(Consciousness without feature, without end,
luminous all around: Here water, earth, fire, &
wind have no footing. Here long & short coarse &
fine fair & foul name & form are all brought to an
end. With the cessation of [the activity of]
consciousness each is here brought to an end.)

This was the answer given by the Buddha to a question asked by a certain monk. There is a fascinating story about this monk. While he was meditating, he started to think [thinking is not the Buddha's meditation], "I wonder where the four great elements the earth element, the water element, the fire element, the air element cease without remainder?" He then went to the different *devâ* realms from the first one to the sixth one, but he could not get the answer. Then, he went to all sixteen Brahma worlds and finally met the Brahma who claimed he was the creator. "Monk, I am Brahma, Great Brahma, the Conqueror, the Unconquered, the All-seeing, All-powerful, the Lord, the Master and Creator, the Ruler, Appointer and Orderer, Father of All that have been and shall be." However, that was not the answer to the question the monk asked. According to the story, finally the Brahma took that monk by his arm, led him aside and said, "Monk, these *devâs* believe there is nothing Brahma does not see, there is nothing he does not know, there is nothing he is unaware of. That is why I did not speak in front of them. But, monk, I don't know where the four great elements cease without remainder. And therefore, monk, you have acted wrongly, you have acted incorrectly by going beyond the Blessed Lord and going in search of an answer to this question elsewhere. Now, monk, you just go to the Blessed Lord and put this question to him, and whatever answer he gives, accept it."

Thereupon, the monk came to the Buddha and asked, "Lord, where do the four great elements cease without remainder?" Our Buddha then said, "Monk, once upon a time seafaring merchants, when they set sail on the ocean, took in their ship a land-sighting bird. When they could not see the land themselves they released this bird. The bird flew to the east, to the south, to the west, to the north; it flew to the zenith and to

the intermediate points of the compass. If it saw land anywhere, it flew there. If it saw no land it returned to the ship. In the same way, monk you have been as far as the Brahma world searching for an answer to your question and not finding it and now you come back to me. Anyway monk, you should not ask your question in this way. “Where do the four great elements the earth element, the water element, the fire element, the air element cease without remainder?” Instead, this is how the question should have been put:

Where do earth, water, fire and air no footing find?
Where are long and short, small and great, fair and foul-
Where do 'name and form' wholly come to cease within?

(Kattha âpo ca pathavi tejo vâyo na gâdhati
Kattha digham ca rassam ca anum thulam
subhâsubham
Kattha nâmanca rupanca asesam uparujjhati.)¹³⁹

It was for this question that the Ocean of Wisdom, the Teacher of the Three-world System, Our Buddha replied as above, explaining the nature of featureless consciousness (*anidassana viññâna*).

According to this explanation, featureless consciousness is not easy to perceive. Even among all the disciples who had the foremost power of divine eye, Venerable *Anuruddha* himself could not see the featureless consciousness of the Buddha at the end of the Buddha's life.

This consciousness has no signs. There is nothing to show 'this' or 'that' in which there is no earth, water, fire and air, no long, short, subtle or gross, no good, no bad, no name or form; all these have come to cease without remainder. Simply with the cessation of physicality and mentality, everything has come to the complete cessation within (*uparujjhati*). That is the complete coolness, the total end of decay and death.

It is the consciousness of the arahant. This consciousness is beyond formations. Therefore, it is called visamkhâra. It is

the intermediate points of the compass. If it saw land anywhere, it flew there. If it saw no land it returned to the ship. In the same way, monk you have been as far as the Brahma world searching for an answer to your question and not finding it and now you come back to me. Anyway monk, you should not ask your question in this way. “Where do the four great elements the earth element, the water element, the fire element, the air element cease without remainder?” Instead, this is how the question should have been put:

Where do earth, water, fire and air no footing find?
Where are long and short, small and great, fair and foul-
Where do 'name and form' wholly come to cease within?

(Kattha âpo ca pathavi tejo vâyo na gâdhati
Kattha digham ca rassam ca anum thulam
subhâsubham
Kattha nâmanca rupanca asesam uparujjhati.)¹³⁹

It was for this question that the Ocean of Wisdom, the Teacher of the Three-world System, Our Buddha replied as above, explaining the nature of featureless consciousness (*anidassana viññâna*).

According to this explanation, featureless consciousness is not easy to perceive. Even among all the disciples who had the foremost power of divine eye, Venerable *Anuruddha* himself could not see the featureless consciousness of the Buddha at the end of the Buddha's life.

This consciousness has no signs. There is nothing to show 'this' or 'that' in which there is no earth, water, fire and air, no long, short, subtle or gross, no good, no bad, no name or form; all these have come to cease without remainder. Simply with the cessation of physicality and mentality, everything has come to the complete cessation within (*uparujjhati*). That is the complete coolness, the total end of decay and death.

It is the consciousness of the arahant. This consciousness is beyond formations. Therefore, it is called visamkhâra. It is

completely free from craving. The Buddha, right after his enlightenment, said, “My mind has gone beyond formations(*visamkhâragatam cittam*) and has attained the unconditioned. Achieved is the end of craving.” Such an Enlightened One sees the world entirely differently. He sees things as they really are. Since his consciousness is luminous to whatever he gives attention, he sees it totally. That is the realization of things as they really are. Here, the difference of the Enlightened One is actually not 'what he sees', but 'how he sees'. That is not merely a perception, but a reflection of consciousness through consciousness, which is called 'apperception'.

Those who have featureless consciousness are living here in this world just like a lighting of a lamp. It is lit only because there is fuel. We come across this simile in a great many of the discourses of the Buddha. Let us consider this simile from *To Vacchagotta on Fire (Aggivacchagotta Sutta)* of *The Middle Length Sayings of the Buddha*.

Once, a certain wanderer named *Aggivacchagotta* came to the Buddha and asked many questions. Referring to the nature of the Enlightened One's mind after death, he asked, “Bhante where will the Enlightened One be born after death?” Then, the following conversation took place between the Buddha and this wanderer ascetic.

Vaccha: When a *bhikkhu's* mind is liberated thus, Master *Gotama*, where does he reappear [after death]?

Buddha: The term 'reappears' does not apply, *Vaccha*.

Vaccha: Then he does not reappear, Master *Gotama*?

Buddha: The term 'does not reappear' does not apply, *Vaccha*.

Vaccha: Then he both reappears and does not reappear, Master *Gotama*?

Buddha: The term 'both reappears and does not reappear' does not apply, *Vaccha*.

Vaccha: Then he neither reappears nor does not reappear, Master *Gotama*?

completely free from craving. The Buddha, right after his enlightenment, said, “My mind has gone beyond formations(*visamkhâragatam cittam*) and has attained the unconditioned. Achieved is the end of craving.” Such an Enlightened One sees the world entirely differently. He sees things as they really are. Since his consciousness is luminous to whatever he gives attention, he sees it totally. That is the realization of things as they really are. Here, the difference of the Enlightened One is actually not 'what he sees', but 'how he sees'. That is not merely a perception, but a reflection of consciousness through consciousness, which is called 'apperception'.

Those who have featureless consciousness are living here in this world just like a lighting of a lamp. It is lit only because there is fuel. We come across this simile in a great many of the discourses of the Buddha. Let us consider this simile from *To Vacchagotta on Fire (Aggivacchagotta Sutta)* of *The Middle Length Sayings of the Buddha*.

Once, a certain wanderer named *Aggivacchagotta* came to the Buddha and asked many questions. Referring to the nature of the Enlightened One's mind after death, he asked, “Bhante where will the Enlightened One be born after death?” Then, the following conversation took place between the Buddha and this wanderer ascetic.

Vaccha: When a *bhikkhu's* mind is liberated thus, Master *Gotama*, where does he reappear [after death]?

Buddha: The term 'reappears' does not apply, *Vaccha*.

Vaccha: Then he does not reappear, Master *Gotama*?

Buddha: The term 'does not reappear' does not apply, *Vaccha*.

Vaccha: Then he both reappears and does not reappear, Master *Gotama*?

Buddha: The term 'both reappears and does not reappear' does not apply, *Vaccha*.

Vaccha: Then he neither reappears nor does not reappear, Master *Gotama*?

Buddha: The term 'neither reappears nor does not reappear' does not apply, *Vaccha*.

Vaccha: When Master *Gotama* is asked these four questions, he replies: 'The term "reappears" does not apply, *Vaccha*; the term "does not reappear" does not apply, *Vaccha*; the term "both reappears and does not reappear" does not apply, *Vaccha*; the term "neither reappears nor does not reappear" does not apply, *Vaccha*.' Here, I have fallen into bewilderment, Master *Gotama*, here I have fallen into confusion, and the measure of confidence I had gained through previous conversation with Master *Gotama* has now disappeared.

Buddha: It is enough to cause you bewilderment, *Vaccha*, enough to cause you confusion. For this Dhamma, *Vaccha*, is profound, hard to see and hard to understand, peaceful and sublime, unattainable by mere reasoning, subtle, to be experienced by the wise. It is hard for you to understand it when you hold another view, accept another teaching, approve of another teaching, pursue a different training, and follow a different teacher. Therefore, I shall question you about this in return, *Vaccha*. Answer as you choose.

Buddha: What do you think, *Vaccha*? Suppose a fire were burning before you. Would you know: 'This fire is burning before me'?

Vaccha: I would, Master *Gotama*.

Buddha: If someone were to ask you, *Vaccha*: 'What does this fire burning before you, burn in dependence on?' - being asked thus, what would you answer?

Vaccha: Being asked thus, Master *Gotama*, I would answer: 'This fire burning before me burns in dependence on grass and sticks.'

Buddha: If that fire before you were to be extinguished, would you know: 'This fire before me has been extinguished'?

Vaccha: I would, Master *Gotama*.

Buddha: If someone were to ask you, *Vaccha*: 'When that fire before you was extinguished, to which direction did it go: to

Buddha: The term 'neither reappears nor does not reappear' does not apply, *Vaccha*.

Vaccha: When Master *Gotama* is asked these four questions, he replies: 'The term "reappears" does not apply, *Vaccha*; the term "does not reappear" does not apply, *Vaccha*; the term "both reappears and does not reappear" does not apply, *Vaccha*; the term "neither reappears nor does not reappear" does not apply, *Vaccha*.' Here, I have fallen into bewilderment, Master *Gotama*, here I have fallen into confusion, and the measure of confidence I had gained through previous conversation with Master *Gotama* has now disappeared.

Buddha: It is enough to cause you bewilderment, *Vaccha*, enough to cause you confusion. For this Dhamma, *Vaccha*, is profound, hard to see and hard to understand, peaceful and sublime, unattainable by mere reasoning, subtle, to be experienced by the wise. It is hard for you to understand it when you hold another view, accept another teaching, approve of another teaching, pursue a different training, and follow a different teacher. Therefore, I shall question you about this in return, *Vaccha*. Answer as you choose.

Buddha: What do you think, *Vaccha*? Suppose a fire were burning before you. Would you know: 'This fire is burning before me'?

Vaccha: I would, Master *Gotama*.

Buddha: If someone were to ask you, *Vaccha*: 'What does this fire burning before you, burn in dependence on?' - being asked thus, what would you answer?

Vaccha: Being asked thus, Master *Gotama*, I would answer: 'This fire burning before me burns in dependence on grass and sticks.'

Buddha: If that fire before you were to be extinguished, would you know: 'This fire before me has been extinguished'?

Vaccha: I would, Master *Gotama*.

Buddha: If someone were to ask you, *Vaccha*: 'When that fire before you was extinguished, to which direction did it go: to

the east, the west, the north, or the south?' - being asked thus, what would you answer?

Vaccha: That does not apply, Master *Gotama*. The fire burned in dependence on its fuel of grass and sticks. When that is used up, if it does not get any more fuel, being without fuel, it is reckoned as extinguished.

Buddha: So too, *Vaccha*, the *Tathâgata* has abandoned that material form by which one describing the *Tathâgata* might describe him; he has cut it off at the root, made it like a palm stump, done away with it so that it is no longer subject to future arising. The *Tathâgata* is liberated from reckoning in terms of material form, *Vaccha*, he is profound, immeasurable, unfathomable like the ocean. The term 'reappears' does not apply, the term 'does not reappear' does not apply, the term 'both reappears and does not reappear' does not apply, the term 'neither reappears nor does not reappear' does not apply. The *Tathâgata* has abandoned that feeling by which one describing the *Tathâgata* might describe him ... has abandoned that perception by which one describing the *Tathâgata* might describe him ... has abandoned those formations by which one describing the *Tathâgata* might describe him ... has abandoned that consciousness by which one describing the *Tathâgata* might describe him; he has cut it off at the root, made it like a palm stump, done away with it so that it is no longer subject to future arising. The *Tathâgata* is liberated from reckoning in terms of consciousness, *Vaccha*; he is profound, immeasurable, unfathomable like the ocean. The term 'reappears' does not apply, the term 'does not reappear' does not apply, the term 'both reappears and does not reappear' does not apply, the term 'neither reappears nor does not reappear' does not apply.

When this was said, the wanderer *Vacchagotta* said to the Blessed One: "Master *Gotama*, suppose there were a great *sala* tree not far from a village or town, and impermanence wore away its branches and foliage, its bark and sapwood, so that on a later occasion, being divested of branches and foliage, divested of bark and sapwood, it became pure,

the east, the west, the north, or the south?' - being asked thus, what would you answer?

Vaccha: That does not apply, Master *Gotama*. The fire burned in dependence on its fuel of grass and sticks. When that is used up, if it does not get any more fuel, being without fuel, it is reckoned as extinguished.

Buddha: So too, *Vaccha*, the *Tathâgata* has abandoned that material form by which one describing the *Tathâgata* might describe him; he has cut it off at the root, made it like a palm stump, done away with it so that it is no longer subject to future arising. The *Tathâgata* is liberated from reckoning in terms of material form, *Vaccha*, he is profound, immeasurable, unfathomable like the ocean. The term 'reappears' does not apply, the term 'does not reappear' does not apply, the term 'both reappears and does not reappear' does not apply, the term 'neither reappears nor does not reappear' does not apply. The *Tathâgata* has abandoned that feeling by which one describing the *Tathâgata* might describe him ... has abandoned that perception by which one describing the *Tathâgata* might describe him ... has abandoned those formations by which one describing the *Tathâgata* might describe him ... has abandoned that consciousness by which one describing the *Tathâgata* might describe him; he has cut it off at the root, made it like a palm stump, done away with it so that it is no longer subject to future arising. The *Tathâgata* is liberated from reckoning in terms of consciousness, *Vaccha*; he is profound, immeasurable, unfathomable like the ocean. The term 'reappears' does not apply, the term 'does not reappear' does not apply, the term 'both reappears and does not reappear' does not apply, the term 'neither reappears nor does not reappear' does not apply.

When this was said, the wanderer *Vacchagotta* said to the Blessed One: "Master *Gotama*, suppose there were a great *sala* tree not far from a village or town, and impermanence wore away its branches and foliage, its bark and sapwood, so that on a later occasion, being divested of branches and foliage, divested of bark and sapwood, it became pure,

consisting entirely of heartwood; so too, this discourse of Master *Gotama's* is divested of branches and foliage, divested of bark and sapwood, and is pure, consisting entirely of heartwood.

“Magnificent, Master *Gotama*! Magnificent, Master *Gotama*! Master *Gotama* has made the Dhamma clear in many ways, as though he were turning upright what had been overthrown, revealing what was hidden, showing the way to one who was lost, or holding up a lamp in the dark for those with eyesight to see forms. I go to Master *Gotama* for refuge and to the Dhamma and to the Sangha of *bhikkhus*. From today let Master *Gotama* remember me as a lay follower who has gone to him for refuge for life.”¹⁴⁰

According to the *Upasiva Sutta* in the *Sutta Nipâta*, once a student named *Upasiva* went to see the Buddha and asked, “Master, you have the eye that sees everything. Tell me, when a man is free from attachment to all pleasures and depends on nothingness, and everything else he lets go, he is freed in the supreme freedom from perception. If this man stays many years in this state without returning, will he be cooled and freed there itself [attain *Nibbâna*], or say whether his consciousness will still exist or not?” The Buddha then said,

“It is like a flame struck by a sudden gust of wind. In a flash it has gone out and noting more can be known about it. It is the same with a wise man freed from mental existence; in a flash he has gone out and nothing more can be known about him.”

(*Acci yathâ vâtavegena khittâ
attham paleti na upeti sankham
Evam muni nâma kâya vimutto
Attham paleti na upeti samkham.*)¹⁴¹

In accordance with this explanation by the Buddha, there is no point in contemplating a sage who has been completely freed from mental body (*nâmakâya*). Such a person lives here in this world only so long as they have these five aggregates. That is their last body (*antimadeha*). With the cessation of that body, they come to the cessation forever.

consisting entirely of heartwood; so too, this discourse of Master *Gotama's* is divested of branches and foliage, divested of bark and sapwood, and is pure, consisting entirely of heartwood.

“Magnificent, Master *Gotama*! Magnificent, Master *Gotama*! Master *Gotama* has made the Dhamma clear in many ways, as though he were turning upright what had been overthrown, revealing what was hidden, showing the way to one who was lost, or holding up a lamp in the dark for those with eyesight to see forms. I go to Master *Gotama* for refuge and to the Dhamma and to the Sangha of *bhikkhus*. From today let Master *Gotama* remember me as a lay follower who has gone to him for refuge for life.”¹⁴⁰

According to the *Upasiva Sutta* in the *Sutta Nipâta*, once a student named *Upasiva* went to see the Buddha and asked, “Master, you have the eye that sees everything. Tell me, when a man is free from attachment to all pleasures and depends on nothingness, and everything else he lets go, he is freed in the supreme freedom from perception. If this man stays many years in this state without returning, will he be cooled and freed there itself [attain *Nibbâna*], or say whether his consciousness will still exist or not?” The Buddha then said,

“It is like a flame struck by a sudden gust of wind. In a flash it has gone out and noting more can be known about it. It is the same with a wise man freed from mental existence; in a flash he has gone out and nothing more can be known about him.”

(*Acci yathâ vâtavegena khittâ
attham paleti na upeti sankham
Evam muni nâma kâya vimutto
Attham paleti na upeti samkham.*)¹⁴¹

In accordance with this explanation by the Buddha, there is no point in contemplating a sage who has been completely freed from mental body (*nâmakâya*). Such a person lives here in this world only so long as they have these five aggregates. That is their last body (*antimadeha*). With the cessation of that body, they come to the cessation forever.

In the *Sutta Nipâta*, in the *Vangisa Sutta*, after Venerable *Vangisa's* preceptor, Venerable *Nigrodhakappa's* passing away, Venerable *Vangisa* started to contemplate whether he had attained *Nibbâna* or not. Then, when it was evening, Venerable *Vangisa* went to the Buddha and asked, “Wise men are the enlighteners. For certain I think you are a wise one. We have come to you, endowed with insight and knowledge. Will you reveal the position of Venerable *Nigrodhakappa* to us in the midst of this assembly? If Venerable *Nigrodhakappa* led a holy life, was it fruitful? Did he attain *Nibbâna* with residue left behind? How was he liberated? That we long to hear.”

The Buddha then said, “He cut off the desire for mind and matter in this world which was *Mâra's* stream flowing for a long time; he has crossed completely all births and deaths.”¹⁴²

In the *Ajita Sutta* also in the *Sutta Nipâta*, we come across a revelation of utmost significance. According to the background of this *sutta*, *Ajita* came to the Buddha together with fifteen other students and asked questions. One of his questions was:

“Venerable sir, where there is wisdom and mindfulness there is also the hybrid of mind and matter [the generation of individuality]. What brings it all to a halt within?”

(*Paññâ ceva sati ceva- nâmarupañca mârisa
Etam me puttho pabruhi katthetam uparujjhati.*)

The Buddha replied:

“Where there comes the complete cessation of both mind and matter, individuality, can be brought to a total end within by the cessation of consciousness right there.”

(*Yattha nâmañca rupañca asesam uparujjhati
Viññânassa nirodhena etthetam uparujjhati.*)

It is impossible to take into account of an Enlightened One who has completely eradicated defilement and attained supreme enlightenment. His consciousness is infinite and luminous from all over. That is the nature of featureless consciousness (*anidassana viññâna*). Those great,

In the *Sutta Nipâta*, in the *Vangisa Sutta*, after Venerable *Vangisa's* preceptor, Venerable *Nigrodhakappa's* passing away, Venerable *Vangisa* started to contemplate whether he had attained *Nibbâna* or not. Then, when it was evening, Venerable *Vangisa* went to the Buddha and asked, “Wise men are the enlighteners. For certain I think you are a wise one. We have come to you, endowed with insight and knowledge. Will you reveal the position of Venerable *Nigrodhakappa* to us in the midst of this assembly? If Venerable *Nigrodhakappa* led a holy life, was it fruitful? Did he attain *Nibbâna* with residue left behind? How was he liberated? That we long to hear.”

The Buddha then said, “He cut off the desire for mind and matter in this world which was *Mâra's* stream flowing for a long time; he has crossed completely all births and deaths.”¹⁴²

In the *Ajita Sutta* also in the *Sutta Nipâta*, we come across a revelation of utmost significance. According to the background of this *sutta*, *Ajita* came to the Buddha together with fifteen other students and asked questions. One of his questions was:

“Venerable sir, where there is wisdom and mindfulness there is also the hybrid of mind and matter [the generation of individuality]. What brings it all to a halt within?”

(*Paññâ ceva sati ceva- nâmarupañca mârisa
Etam me puttho pabruhi katthetam uparujjhati.*)

The Buddha replied:

“Where there comes the complete cessation of both mind and matter, individuality, can be brought to a total end within by the cessation of consciousness right there.”

(*Yattha nâmañca rupañca asesam uparujjhati
Viññânassa nirodhena etthetam uparujjhati.*)

It is impossible to take into account of an Enlightened One who has completely eradicated defilement and attained supreme enlightenment. His consciousness is infinite and luminous from all over. That is the nature of featureless consciousness (*anidassana viññâna*). Those great,

enlightened beings who have realized *Nibbâna* never come back to *samsâra*. As they themselves have already expressed their blissful state, “Birth is destroyed, lived is the holy life, done what had to be done, there is nothing more to be done.” He has been released from all bonds and liberated from all taints. Since he has been liberated, he knows that his mind is liberated (*vimuttasmim vimuttamiti ñanam hoti*). He lived a blissful life from the time of his enlightenment until his passing away. After his passing away, he never comes back to *samsâra*.

Our Supreme Buddha attained full enlightenment under the Bodhi tree on the full moon day of *Vesak*. From that day on, for the rest of his life of 80 years, he enjoyed the great bliss of *Nibbâna*. With the understanding of how the Buddha passed away into *parinibbâna* not to be born again, we can understand the passing away of the five aggregates or remainderless passing away of the Buddha. Therefore, let us now strive to understand how the Buddha passed away at *Upavartana Sala* grove of *Malla* at *Kusinârâ* after his marvelous service of forty-five years for the benefit and happiness of multitudes of beings.

The Last Days of The Buddha and How He Passed Away into Parinibbâna

As many of us have heard, the Buddha passed away into *parinibbâna* at a very remote place called *Kusinâra* at the age of eighty. For the people of that time, it was really a great loss, a great shock. They all felt like the great light that was illuminating the world was extinguished. However, in reality, that was the nature of all conditioned things.

Let us understand phase by phase, the last three months of the Buddha's approach to the site where he passed away. Understanding his journey to *Kusinara* reveals the wonderful and marvelous humanistic nature of Our Supreme Buddha. It is illustrated in the sutta titled the *Last Days of the Buddha* of the *Digha Nikaya*.

According to this discourse, once while Our Buddha was dwelling on the top of Vulture Peak, a great minister of the

enlightened beings who have realized *Nibbâna* never come back to *samsâra*. As they themselves have already expressed their blissful state, “Birth is destroyed, lived is the holy life, done what had to be done, there is nothing more to be done.” He has been released from all bonds and liberated from all taints. Since he has been liberated, he knows that his mind is liberated (*vimuttasmim vimuttamiti ñanam hoti*). He lived a blissful life from the time of his enlightenment until his passing away. After his passing away, he never comes back to *samsâra*.

Our Supreme Buddha attained full enlightenment under the Bodhi tree on the full moon day of *Vesak*. From that day on, for the rest of his life of 80 years, he enjoyed the great bliss of *Nibbâna*. With the understanding of how the Buddha passed away into *parinibbâna* not to be born again, we can understand the passing away of the five aggregates or remainderless passing away of the Buddha. Therefore, let us now strive to understand how the Buddha passed away at *Upavartana Sala* grove of *Malla* at *Kusinârâ* after his marvelous service of forty-five years for the benefit and happiness of multitudes of beings.

The Last Days of The Buddha and How He Passed Away into Parinibbâna

As many of us have heard, the Buddha passed away into *parinibbâna* at a very remote place called *Kusinâra* at the age of eighty. For the people of that time, it was really a great loss, a great shock. They all felt like the great light that was illuminating the world was extinguished. However, in reality, that was the nature of all conditioned things.

Let us understand phase by phase, the last three months of the Buddha's approach to the site where he passed away. Understanding his journey to *Kusinara* reveals the wonderful and marvelous humanistic nature of Our Supreme Buddha. It is illustrated in the sutta titled the *Last Days of the Buddha* of the *Digha Nikaya*.

According to this discourse, once while Our Buddha was dwelling on the top of Vulture Peak, a great minister of the

King *Ajatasattu* named *Vassakara* went to meet the Buddha. After their courteous greetings, he sat down to one side and delivered a message from King *Ajatasattu*. The message was: “I will strike the *Vajjins* who are so powerful and strong, I will cut them off and destroy them, I will bring them to ruin and destruction!” This message was sent in order to ascertain the Buddha's opinion on this. When this was put to the Buddha, the Buddha said to Venerable *Ananda* who was fanning the Buddha. “*Ananda*, as long as *Vajjins* follow the seven undefeated and non-decline factors, no one could destroy them.” These seven factors are really undefeated. They are for the prosperity and success of any institution, society, organization, or club, even today.

They are:

1. Holding regular and frequent meetings.
2. Meet in harmony, break up in harmony, and carry on their business in harmony
3. Neither appoint new rules, nor abolish the existing ones, but proceed in accordance with the ancient constitution
4. Honor, respect, revere and salute the elders among them and consider them worth listening to.
5. Never forcefully abduct others' wives and daughters and compel them to live with them.
6. Honor respect, revere and salute the shrines at home and abroad, not withdrawing the proper support made and given them before.
7. Make proper provision for the safety of *arahants*, so that such *arahants* may come in the future to live there and those already there may dwell in comfort.

Our Buddha himself has taught these seven undefeated factors to the *Vajjins* once while the Buddha was dwelling at the place called *Sârandada* shrine.

The chief minister, *Vassakâra*, having heard of the Buddha's explanation to Venerable *Ananda*, departed the Buddha. Soon after his departure, the Buddha addressed the Venerable *Ananda* and said, “*Ananda* go get all the monks living in this

King *Ajatasattu* named *Vassakara* went to meet the Buddha. After their courteous greetings, he sat down to one side and delivered a message from King *Ajatasattu*. The message was: “I will strike the *Vajjins* who are so powerful and strong, I will cut them off and destroy them, I will bring them to ruin and destruction!” This message was sent in order to ascertain the Buddha's opinion on this. When this was put to the Buddha, the Buddha said to Venerable *Ananda* who was fanning the Buddha. “*Ananda*, as long as *Vajjins* follow the seven undefeated and non-decline factors, no one could destroy them.” These seven factors are really undefeated. They are for the prosperity and success of any institution, society, organization, or club, even today.

They are:

1. Holding regular and frequent meetings.
2. Meet in harmony, break up in harmony, and carry on their business in harmony
3. Neither appoint new rules, nor abolish the existing ones, but proceed in accordance with the ancient constitution
4. Honor, respect, revere and salute the elders among them and consider them worth listening to.
5. Never forcefully abduct others' wives and daughters and compel them to live with them.
6. Honor respect, revere and salute the shrines at home and abroad, not withdrawing the proper support made and given them before.
7. Make proper provision for the safety of *arahants*, so that such *arahants* may come in the future to live there and those already there may dwell in comfort.

Our Buddha himself has taught these seven undefeated factors to the *Vajjins* once while the Buddha was dwelling at the place called *Sârandada* shrine.

The chief minister, *Vassakâra*, having heard of the Buddha's explanation to Venerable *Ananda*, departed the Buddha. Soon after his departure, the Buddha addressed the Venerable *Ananda* and said, “*Ananda* go get all the monks living in this

Râjagaha and arrange the assembly in the guest hall.” Then, Venerable *Ananda* went to the city and informed all monks to assemble and then Venerable *Ananda* informed the Buddha that the assembly is ready. Thereupon, the Buddha reached the hall and addressed the monks. Addressing them, the Buddha gave quite similar seven undefeated factors for the benefit and happiness of the monks. The Buddha said:

1. As long as the monks hold regular and frequent assemblies, they may be expected to prosper and not decline.
2. As long as they meet in harmony, break up in harmony, and carry on their business in harmony, they may be expected to prosper and not to decline.
3. As long as they do not authorize what has not been authorized already, and do not abolish what has been authorized by the rules of training, they may be expected to prosper and not to decline.
4. As long as they honor, respect, revere and salute the elders of long ordained, fathers and leaders of the order, they may be expected to prosper and not to decline.
5. As long as they do not fall prey to desires which arise in them and lead to rebirth, they may be expected to prosper and not to decline.
6. As long as they are devoted to forest lodging, they may be expected to prosper and not to decline.
7. As long as they preserve their personal mindfulness, in future, the good among their companions will come to them, and those who have already come, they will feel at ease with them; they may be expected to prosper and not to decline.

In this manner, Our Buddha taught different forms of undefeated factors for the monks and further admonished them about the importance of practicing, developing, and cultivating the three trainings of morality, concentration, and wisdom. Here, the Buddha emphasized practicing these three for the complete extermination of the taints of sensual desire (*kâmâsava*), taints of existence (*bhavâsava*), and the taints of

Râjagaha and arrange the assembly in the guest hall.” Then, Venerable *Ananda* went to the city and informed all monks to assemble and then Venerable *Ananda* informed the Buddha that the assembly is ready. Thereupon, the Buddha reached the hall and addressed the monks. Addressing them, the Buddha gave quite similar seven undefeated factors for the benefit and happiness of the monks. The Buddha said:

1. As long as the monks hold regular and frequent assemblies, they may be expected to prosper and not decline.
2. As long as they meet in harmony, break up in harmony, and carry on their business in harmony, they may be expected to prosper and not to decline.
3. As long as they do not authorize what has not been authorized already, and do not abolish what has been authorized by the rules of training, they may be expected to prosper and not to decline.
4. As long as they honor, respect, revere and salute the elders of long ordained, fathers and leaders of the order, they may be expected to prosper and not to decline.
5. As long as they do not fall prey to desires which arise in them and lead to rebirth, they may be expected to prosper and not to decline.
6. As long as they are devoted to forest lodging, they may be expected to prosper and not to decline.
7. As long as they preserve their personal mindfulness, in future, the good among their companions will come to them, and those who have already come, they will feel at ease with them; they may be expected to prosper and not to decline.

In this manner, Our Buddha taught different forms of undefeated factors for the monks and further admonished them about the importance of practicing, developing, and cultivating the three trainings of morality, concentration, and wisdom. Here, the Buddha emphasized practicing these three for the complete extermination of the taints of sensual desire (*kâmâsava*), taints of existence (*bhavâsava*), and the taints of

ignorance (*avijjâsava*). After dwelling there for sometime, the Buddha addressed Venerable *Ananda* and said, “*Ananda*, now let us go to *Ambalatthikâ* Grove.” Thus, the Buddha, together with Venerable *Ananda*, visited *Ambalatthikâ* and there also he preached the importance of practicing, developing, and cultivating the three trainings of morality, concentration and wisdom. From there, the Buddha visited *Nâlandâ* together with Venerable *Ananda* and the retinue of monks. Our Buddha lived at *Pâvârîka's* mango grove in *Nâlandâ*.

Nâlandâ was a very special place during that time too. That was the hometown of the Venerable *Sâriputta*. Here the Venerable *Sâriputta* came to the Buddha and said, “Venerable sir, it is clear to me, that there never has been, will be, or is now another ascetic or *Brahmin* who is better or more enlightened than the Lord.” The Buddha then said, “Lofty indeed is this speech of yours, *Sâriputta*, and lordly! A bold utterance, a veritable sounding of the lion's roar! But how is this, *Sâriputta*? Those *arahants*, Fully Enlightened Ones of the past do you have direct personal knowledge of all those Blessed Ones, as to their virtue, their meditation, their wisdom, their abiding, and their emancipation?” Venerable *Sâriputta* said, “Not so Lord.” Thereupon, the Buddha said, “Then it is clear, *Sâriputta*, that you have no such direct personal knowledge of the *arahants*, the Fully Enlightened Ones of the past, the future, and the present. How then dare you set forth a speech so lofty and lordly, an utterance so bold, a veritable sounding of the lion's roar?”

Then, Venerable *Sâriputta* said, “No such direct personal knowledge, indeed, is mine, Lord, of the *arahants*, the fully Enlightened Ones of the past, the future, and the present; and yet I have come to know the lawfulness of the Dhamma. Suppose, Lord, a king's frontier fortress was strongly fortified, with strong ramparts and turrets, and it had a single gate, and there was a gatekeeper, intelligent, experienced, and prudent, who would keep out the stranger, but allow the friend to enter. As he patrols the path that leads all around the fortress, he does not perceive a hole or fissure in the ramparts

ignorance (*avijjâsava*). After dwelling there for sometime, the Buddha addressed Venerable *Ananda* and said, “*Ananda*, now let us go to *Ambalatthikâ* Grove.” Thus, the Buddha, together with Venerable *Ananda*, visited *Ambalatthikâ* and there also he preached the importance of practicing, developing, and cultivating the three trainings of morality, concentration and wisdom. From there, the Buddha visited *Nâlandâ* together with Venerable *Ananda* and the retinue of monks. Our Buddha lived at *Pâvârîka's* mango grove in *Nâlandâ*.

Nâlandâ was a very special place during that time too. That was the hometown of the Venerable *Sâriputta*. Here the Venerable *Sâriputta* came to the Buddha and said, “Venerable sir, it is clear to me, that there never has been, will be, or is now another ascetic or *Brahmin* who is better or more enlightened than the Lord.” The Buddha then said, “Lofty indeed is this speech of yours, *Sâriputta*, and lordly! A bold utterance, a veritable sounding of the lion's roar! But how is this, *Sâriputta*? Those *arahants*, Fully Enlightened Ones of the past do you have direct personal knowledge of all those Blessed Ones, as to their virtue, their meditation, their wisdom, their abiding, and their emancipation?” Venerable *Sâriputta* said, “Not so Lord.” Thereupon, the Buddha said, “Then it is clear, *Sâriputta*, that you have no such direct personal knowledge of the *arahants*, the Fully Enlightened Ones of the past, the future, and the present. How then dare you set forth a speech so lofty and lordly, an utterance so bold, a veritable sounding of the lion's roar?”

Then, Venerable *Sâriputta* said, “No such direct personal knowledge, indeed, is mine, Lord, of the *arahants*, the fully Enlightened Ones of the past, the future, and the present; and yet I have come to know the lawfulness of the Dhamma. Suppose, Lord, a king's frontier fortress was strongly fortified, with strong ramparts and turrets, and it had a single gate, and there was a gatekeeper, intelligent, experienced, and prudent, who would keep out the stranger, but allow the friend to enter. As he patrols the path that leads all around the fortress, he does not perceive a hole or fissure in the ramparts

even big enough to allow a cat to slip through. So he comes to the conclusion: 'Whatever grosser living things are to enter or leave this city, they will all have to do so just by this gate.' In the same way, Lord, I have come to know the lawfulness of the Dhamma."

Our Supreme Buddha, after dwelling in *Nâlandâ* as long as he wished, then suggested to Venerable *Ananda* they visit *Pâtaligâma*. Thereupon, together with a retinue of monks, the Buddha visited *Pâtaligâma*. This is the present day city of *Patna* which was called *Pâtaliputra* in the time of the Emperor *Asoka*. The people of this particular village being so delighted with the Buddha's visit to their village built a special house for the Buddha and the monastics and offered it to the Order. After addressing the people of the village, the Buddha delivered some special discourses. It was here in this village the Buddha taught them five perils for the immoral person who falls away from morality and five blessings that accrue to the person who leads a moral life. In such a way, Our Buddha spent much of the night and taught them the Dhamma.

It was during this time that the two chief ministers of *Magadha* were there to plan and build *Patna* city. They offered meals to the Buddha and monks and from there the Buddha visited the other side of the river Ganges. When the Buddha departed, they both followed behind the Buddha and the gate through which the Buddha departed, they named it "*Gotama-gate*" and where he crossed the river Ganges they named the ford "*Gotama-ford*."¹⁴³

When our Supreme Buddha came to the river Ganges, it was full to the brim. People were trying to find boats and floats. Some tied up rafts to get across the river Ganges. Our Buddha, as quickly as a strong man might stretch out his bent arm or draw in his outstretched arm, vanished from this side of the river and then came to stand on the other side. All on the bank of the river were amazed and surprised. That was a simple miracle for the Buddha. After crossing the river Ganges, the Buddha addressing Venerable *Ananda* said, "*Ananda* let's now visit *Kotigâma*," and then they all went to *Kotigâma*.

even big enough to allow a cat to slip through. So he comes to the conclusion: 'Whatever grosser living things are to enter or leave this city, they will all have to do so just by this gate.' In the same way, Lord, I have come to know the lawfulness of the Dhamma."

Our Supreme Buddha, after dwelling in *Nâlandâ* as long as he wished, then suggested to Venerable *Ananda* they visit *Pâtaligâma*. Thereupon, together with a retinue of monks, the Buddha visited *Pâtaligâma*. This is the present day city of *Patna* which was called *Pâtaliputra* in the time of the Emperor *Asoka*. The people of this particular village being so delighted with the Buddha's visit to their village built a special house for the Buddha and the monastics and offered it to the Order. After addressing the people of the village, the Buddha delivered some special discourses. It was here in this village the Buddha taught them five perils for the immoral person who falls away from morality and five blessings that accrue to the person who leads a moral life. In such a way, Our Buddha spent much of the night and taught them the Dhamma.

It was during this time that the two chief ministers of *Magadha* were there to plan and build *Patna* city. They offered meals to the Buddha and monks and from there the Buddha visited the other side of the river Ganges. When the Buddha departed, they both followed behind the Buddha and the gate through which the Buddha departed, they named it "*Gotama-gate*" and where he crossed the river Ganges they named the ford "*Gotama-ford*."¹⁴³

When our Supreme Buddha came to the river Ganges, it was full to the brim. People were trying to find boats and floats. Some tied up rafts to get across the river Ganges. Our Buddha, as quickly as a strong man might stretch out his bent arm or draw in his outstretched arm, vanished from this side of the river and then came to stand on the other side. All on the bank of the river were amazed and surprised. That was a simple miracle for the Buddha. After crossing the river Ganges, the Buddha addressing Venerable *Ananda* said, "*Ananda* let's now visit *Kotigâma*," and then they all went to *Kotigâma*.

When the Buddha was dwelling at *Kotigâma*, he declared “*Bhikkhus*, those ascetics or *brahmins* who do not understand as it really is: 'This is suffering;' who do not understand as it really is: 'This is the origin of suffering;' who do not understand as it really is: 'This is the cessation of suffering;' who do not understand as it really is: 'This is the way leading to the cessation of suffering': these I do not consider to be ascetics among ascetics or *brahmins* among *brahmins*, and these venerable ones do not, by realizing it for themselves with direct knowledge, enter and dwell, in this very life, in the goal of asceticism or the goal of *brahmin*-hood. However, *bhikkhus*, those ascetics or *brahmins* who understand these things: these I consider to be ascetics among ascetics and *brahmins* among *brahmins*, and these venerable ones, by realizing it for themselves with direct knowledge, enter and dwell, in this very life, in the goal of asceticism and the goal of *brahmin*-hood.”¹⁴⁴

Further the Buddha said, “It is, *bhikkhus*, because of not understanding and not penetrating the noble truth of suffering that you and I have roamed and wandered through this long course of *samsara*. It is because of not understanding and not penetrating the noble truth of the origin of suffering ... the noble truth of the cessation of suffering ... the noble truth of the way leading to the cessation of suffering that you and I have roamed and wandered through this long course of *samsara*. That noble truth of suffering, *bhikkhus*, has been understood and penetrated. That noble truth of the origin of suffering has been understood and penetrated. That noble truth of the cessation of suffering has been understood and penetrated. That noble truth of the way leading to the cessation of suffering has been understood and penetrated. Craving for existence has been cut off; the conduit to existence has been destroyed; now there is no more renewed existence.”¹⁴⁵

While dwelling here, at *Kotigâma*, the Buddha also emphasized the need for practicing, developing, and cultivating the three trainings of morality, concentration, and wisdom.

When the Buddha was dwelling at *Kotigâma*, he declared “*Bhikkhus*, those ascetics or *brahmins* who do not understand as it really is: 'This is suffering;' who do not understand as it really is: 'This is the origin of suffering;' who do not understand as it really is: 'This is the cessation of suffering;' who do not understand as it really is: 'This is the way leading to the cessation of suffering': these I do not consider to be ascetics among ascetics or *brahmins* among *brahmins*, and these venerable ones do not, by realizing it for themselves with direct knowledge, enter and dwell, in this very life, in the goal of asceticism or the goal of *brahmin*-hood. However, *bhikkhus*, those ascetics or *brahmins* who understand these things: these I consider to be ascetics among ascetics and *brahmins* among *brahmins*, and these venerable ones, by realizing it for themselves with direct knowledge, enter and dwell, in this very life, in the goal of asceticism and the goal of *brahmin*-hood.”¹⁴⁴

Further the Buddha said, “It is, *bhikkhus*, because of not understanding and not penetrating the noble truth of suffering that you and I have roamed and wandered through this long course of *samsara*. It is because of not understanding and not penetrating the noble truth of the origin of suffering ... the noble truth of the cessation of suffering ... the noble truth of the way leading to the cessation of suffering that you and I have roamed and wandered through this long course of *samsara*. That noble truth of suffering, *bhikkhus*, has been understood and penetrated. That noble truth of the origin of suffering has been understood and penetrated. That noble truth of the cessation of suffering has been understood and penetrated. That noble truth of the way leading to the cessation of suffering has been understood and penetrated. Craving for existence has been cut off; the conduit to existence has been destroyed; now there is no more renewed existence.”¹⁴⁵

While dwelling here, at *Kotigâma*, the Buddha also emphasized the need for practicing, developing, and cultivating the three trainings of morality, concentration, and wisdom.

From *Kotigâma*, Our Buddha, together with Venerable *Ananda* and other disciples went to *Nadikâ*. While he was dwelling there, many people came to the Buddha to understand the destinations of their near and dear departed ones. They asked questions from Venerable *Ananda* who thereafter informed the Buddha. Buddha, answering the questions, revealed the destination of *Salha* the monk, *Nanda* the nun, *Sudatta* the male lay follower, and *Sujâtâ* the laywoman follower of the Buddha, Dhamma, and the Sangha. Further, the Buddha gave a list of men and women who passed away. They were: *Kakudha*, *Kalinga*, *Nikata*, *Katissabha*, *Tuttha*, *Santuttha*, *Bhaddiya*, and *Subhadda*.

These visitors wanted to know where all these were reborn. Then, the Buddha clearly told them of their destinations.

Our Supreme Buddha then further disclosed that in this very place of *Nadikâ* about fifty people had passed away after cutting off the five lower fetters and attaining the holy stage of non-returner and were born in a pure abode to attain *Nibbana* there. They would never come back. More than ninety people had attained the stage of once-returner and would come back only once. More than 500 people had become stream-enterers, never to be reborn in hells, but certainly they would realize *Nibbana*.

Having taught in this manner, the Buddha understood that it was non-stop questions and answers to reveal the destination of people's relatives. Therefore, the Buddha gave us the mirror of the Dhamma. That mirror of the Dhamma is the mirror to hold up to one self to understand one's own destination. That mirror of the Dhamma is the attainment of the stage of stream-entry. For this purpose, the Buddha pointed out the necessity of developing and cultivating four factors, which are called the factors of the stream-enterer. They are:

1. Confirmed conviction in the Buddha
2. Confirmed conviction in the Dhamma
3. Confirmed conviction in the Sangha
4. Morality, which is dear to the Noble Ones and conducive to concentration

From *Kotigâma*, Our Buddha, together with Venerable *Ananda* and other disciples went to *Nadikâ*. While he was dwelling there, many people came to the Buddha to understand the destinations of their near and dear departed ones. They asked questions from Venerable *Ananda* who thereafter informed the Buddha. Buddha, answering the questions, revealed the destination of *Salha* the monk, *Nanda* the nun, *Sudatta* the male lay follower, and *Sujâtâ* the laywoman follower of the Buddha, Dhamma, and the Sangha. Further, the Buddha gave a list of men and women who passed away. They were: *Kakudha*, *Kalinga*, *Nikata*, *Katissabha*, *Tuttha*, *Santuttha*, *Bhaddiya*, and *Subhadda*.

These visitors wanted to know where all these were reborn. Then, the Buddha clearly told them of their destinations.

Our Supreme Buddha then further disclosed that in this very place of *Nadikâ* about fifty people had passed away after cutting off the five lower fetters and attaining the holy stage of non-returner and were born in a pure abode to attain *Nibbana* there. They would never come back. More than ninety people had attained the stage of once-returner and would come back only once. More than 500 people had become stream-enterers, never to be reborn in hells, but certainly they would realize *Nibbana*.

Having taught in this manner, the Buddha understood that it was non-stop questions and answers to reveal the destination of people's relatives. Therefore, the Buddha gave us the mirror of the Dhamma. That mirror of the Dhamma is the mirror to hold up to one self to understand one's own destination. That mirror of the Dhamma is the attainment of the stage of stream-entry. For this purpose, the Buddha pointed out the necessity of developing and cultivating four factors, which are called the factors of the stream-enterer. They are:

1. Confirmed conviction in the Buddha
2. Confirmed conviction in the Dhamma
3. Confirmed conviction in the Sangha
4. Morality, which is dear to the Noble Ones and conducive to concentration

Our Buddha, having dwelled at *Nadikâ* as long as he wished, decided to visit *Vesâli* and said, “*Ananda*, shall we now visit *Vesâli*?” Thereafter, they went to *Vesâli* [This is how the Buddha journeyed to *Kusinârâ* where he passed away into *parinibbâna*.]

When the Buddha visited *Vesâli*, he lived in the *Ambapâli*'s mango grove with the retinue of his disciples.

Now, in this mango grove the Buddha gave us a very special and wonderful admonition. He said, “*Bhikkhus*, a *bhikkhu* should dwell mindful and clearly comprehending: this is our instruction to you. And how, *bhikkhus*, is a *bhikkhu* mindful? Here, *bhikkhus*, a *bhikkhu* dwells contemplating the body in the body, ardent, clearly comprehending, mindful, having removed covetousness and displeasure in regard to the world. He dwells contemplating feelings in feelings ... mind in mind ... phenomena in phenomena, ardent, clearly comprehending, mindful, having removed covetousness and displeasure in regard to the world. It is in this way, *bhikkhus*, that a *bhikkhu* is mindful. And how, *bhikkhus*, does a *bhikkhu* exercise clear comprehension? Here, *bhikkhus*, a *bhikkhu* is one who acts with clear comprehension when going forward and returning; when looking ahead and looking aside; when drawing in and extending the limbs; when wearing his robes and carrying his outer robe and bowl; when eating, drinking, chewing his food, and tasting; when defecating and urinating; when walking, standing, sitting, falling asleep, waking up, speaking, and keeping silent. It is in such a way that a *bhikkhu* exercises clear comprehension.”¹⁴⁶

Here, the emphasis is given to the development of mindfulness and clear comprehension. Dwelling in mindfulness and clear comprehension means dwelling in the four establishments of mindfulness.

At this time, *Ambapâli*¹⁴⁷ came to know that Our Buddha had approached *Vesali* together with a retinue of his disciples and was dwelling in her mango grove. She then went to see the Buddha. Being delighted that they were in her mango grove, she listened to the Dhamma talks delivered by the Buddha. At

Our Buddha, having dwelled at *Nadikâ* as long as he wished, decided to visit *Vesâli* and said, “*Ananda*, shall we now visit *Vesâli*?” Thereafter, they went to *Vesâli* [This is how the Buddha journeyed to *Kusinârâ* where he passed away into *parinibbâna*.]

When the Buddha visited *Vesâli*, he lived in the *Ambapâli*'s mango grove with the retinue of his disciples.

Now, in this mango grove the Buddha gave us a very special and wonderful admonition. He said, “*Bhikkhus*, a *bhikkhu* should dwell mindful and clearly comprehending: this is our instruction to you. And how, *bhikkhus*, is a *bhikkhu* mindful? Here, *bhikkhus*, a *bhikkhu* dwells contemplating the body in the body, ardent, clearly comprehending, mindful, having removed covetousness and displeasure in regard to the world. He dwells contemplating feelings in feelings ... mind in mind ... phenomena in phenomena, ardent, clearly comprehending, mindful, having removed covetousness and displeasure in regard to the world. It is in this way, *bhikkhus*, that a *bhikkhu* is mindful. And how, *bhikkhus*, does a *bhikkhu* exercise clear comprehension? Here, *bhikkhus*, a *bhikkhu* is one who acts with clear comprehension when going forward and returning; when looking ahead and looking aside; when drawing in and extending the limbs; when wearing his robes and carrying his outer robe and bowl; when eating, drinking, chewing his food, and tasting; when defecating and urinating; when walking, standing, sitting, falling asleep, waking up, speaking, and keeping silent. It is in such a way that a *bhikkhu* exercises clear comprehension.”¹⁴⁶

Here, the emphasis is given to the development of mindfulness and clear comprehension. Dwelling in mindfulness and clear comprehension means dwelling in the four establishments of mindfulness.

At this time, *Ambapâli*¹⁴⁷ came to know that Our Buddha had approached *Vesali* together with a retinue of his disciples and was dwelling in her mango grove. She then went to see the Buddha. Being delighted that they were in her mango grove, she listened to the Dhamma talks delivered by the Buddha. At

the end of the talks, she invited the Buddha to visit her home on the following day for the noon-meal together with all his disciples. With silence, the Buddha accepted her invitation.

Right after she departed, the king of *Licchavi* in *Vesâli* came to see the Buddha. They also invited the Buddha for the following day noon-meal. Now, it was a clear conflict. Now, as we generally see it, the Buddha would decide to go to the ruler's meal, but Buddha made the decision the other way around. The following day, together with all of his disciples, the Buddha visited *Ambapâli's* home for the noon-meal. The Buddha followed the Dhammic way, the priority system. Since the Buddha had already accepted the invitation extended by *Ambapâli*, the Buddha decided to go not to the King's palace, but to *Ambapâli's* home.

On this day, as the *Licchavi* rulers were approaching the monastery, the Buddha pointing them out said, “Monks, behold these *Licchavi's*, if you have not seen the *devas* in the *Tâvatimsa* the heaven [for their appearance similar to that of the gods].”

While dwelling in *Ambapâli's* mango grove, the Buddha also emphasized the need of practicing, developing, and cultivating morality, concentration, and wisdom. Our Buddha lived there too for sometime and then said to *Ananda*, “*Ananda* let's now visit *Beluva* village. Thus, the Buddha together with his disciples visited *Beluva* village. After approaching the village the Buddha addressed the monks and said, “You, monks, should go to anywhere in *Vesâli* where you have friends or acquaintances or supporters, and spend the Rains there. I shall spend the Rains here in *Beluva*.” Thus, the Buddha observed Rains residence in *Beluva*. Unfortunately, it was during this time that Our Buddha was attacked by a severe sickness, with sharp pains as if he were about to die. However, he endured all mindfully, clearly comprehending and without complaining.

The Buddha thought: “It is not fitting that I should attain final *Nibbâna* without addressing my followers and taking leave of the order of monks. I must hold this disease in check by

the end of the talks, she invited the Buddha to visit her home on the following day for the noon-meal together with all his disciples. With silence, the Buddha accepted her invitation.

Right after she departed, the king of *Licchavi* in *Vesâli* came to see the Buddha. They also invited the Buddha for the following day noon-meal. Now, it was a clear conflict. Now, as we generally see it, the Buddha would decide to go to the ruler's meal, but Buddha made the decision the other way around. The following day, together with all of his disciples, the Buddha visited *Ambapâli's* home for the noon-meal. The Buddha followed the Dhammic way, the priority system. Since the Buddha had already accepted the invitation extended by *Ambapâli*, the Buddha decided to go not to the King's palace, but to *Ambapâli's* home.

On this day, as the *Licchavi* rulers were approaching the monastery, the Buddha pointing them out said, “Monks, behold these *Licchavi's*, if you have not seen the *devas* in the *Tâvatimsa* the heaven [for their appearance similar to that of the gods].”

While dwelling in *Ambapâli's* mango grove, the Buddha also emphasized the need of practicing, developing, and cultivating morality, concentration, and wisdom. Our Buddha lived there too for sometime and then said to *Ananda*, “*Ananda* let's now visit *Beluva* village. Thus, the Buddha together with his disciples visited *Beluva* village. After approaching the village the Buddha addressed the monks and said, “You, monks, should go to anywhere in *Vesâli* where you have friends or acquaintances or supporters, and spend the Rains there. I shall spend the Rains here in *Beluva*.” Thus, the Buddha observed Rains residence in *Beluva*. Unfortunately, it was during this time that Our Buddha was attacked by a severe sickness, with sharp pains as if he were about to die. However, he endured all mindfully, clearly comprehending and without complaining.

The Buddha thought: “It is not fitting that I should attain final *Nibbâna* without addressing my followers and taking leave of the order of monks. I must hold this disease in check by

energy and apply myself to the force of life.” He did so and the disease abated. Then, the Buddha recovered from his sickness. As soon as he felt better, he went outside and sat on a prepared seat in front of his dwelling. Then, the Venerable *Ananda* came there and saluted him and said, “Venerable sir, I have seen the Lord in comfort, and I have seen the Lord's patient enduring. And Lord, my body was like a drunkard's. I lost my bearings and things were unclear to me because of the Lord's sickness. The only thing that was some comfort to me was the thought: The Lord will not attain final *Nibbâna* until he has made some statement about the order of monks. [Buddhas and the enlightened ones, in advance, can decide the date, time, and place where they want to pass away.]

The Buddha then said to Venerable *Ananda*, “*Ananda*, what does the order of monks expect of me? I have taught the Dhamma clearly without any concealment. The *Tathâgata* has no “teacher's fist” [to conceal teachings] in respect of Dhamma. If there is anyone who thinks: “I shall take charge of the order” or “the order should refer to me” let him make some statement about the order, but the *Tathâgata* does not think in such terms. So why should the *Tathâgata* make a statement about the order?”

“*Ananda*, I am now old, worn out, venerable, one who has traversed life's path, I have reached the term of life, which is eighty. Just as an old cart is made to go by being held together with straps, so the *Tathagata's* body is kept going by being strapped up. It is only when the *Tathagata* withdraws his attention from outward signs, and by the cessation of certain feelings, enters into the signless concentration of mind, that his body knows comfort.

“Therefore, *Ananda*, you should live as an island to yourself. Being your own refuge, with no one else as your refuge, with the Dhamma as an island, with the Dhamma as your refuge, with no other refuge. And how does a monk live as an island unto himself, being his own refuge, with no other refuge? Here, *Ananda*, a monk abides contemplating the body as body, earnestly, clearly aware, mindful and having put away all hankering and fretting for the world, and likewise with

energy and apply myself to the force of life.” He did so and the disease abated. Then, the Buddha recovered from his sickness. As soon as he felt better, he went outside and sat on a prepared seat in front of his dwelling. Then, the Venerable *Ananda* came there and saluted him and said, “Venerable sir, I have seen the Lord in comfort, and I have seen the Lord's patient enduring. And Lord, my body was like a drunkard's. I lost my bearings and things were unclear to me because of the Lord's sickness. The only thing that was some comfort to me was the thought: The Lord will not attain final *Nibbâna* until he has made some statement about the order of monks. [Buddhas and the enlightened ones, in advance, can decide the date, time, and place where they want to pass away.]

The Buddha then said to Venerable *Ananda*, “*Ananda*, what does the order of monks expect of me? I have taught the Dhamma clearly without any concealment. The *Tathâgata* has no “teacher's fist” [to conceal teachings] in respect of Dhamma. If there is anyone who thinks: “I shall take charge of the order” or “the order should refer to me” let him make some statement about the order, but the *Tathâgata* does not think in such terms. So why should the *Tathâgata* make a statement about the order?”

“*Ananda*, I am now old, worn out, venerable, one who has traversed life's path, I have reached the term of life, which is eighty. Just as an old cart is made to go by being held together with straps, so the *Tathagata's* body is kept going by being strapped up. It is only when the *Tathagata* withdraws his attention from outward signs, and by the cessation of certain feelings, enters into the signless concentration of mind, that his body knows comfort.

“Therefore, *Ananda*, you should live as an island to yourself. Being your own refuge, with no one else as your refuge, with the Dhamma as an island, with the Dhamma as your refuge, with no other refuge. And how does a monk live as an island unto himself, being his own refuge, with no other refuge? Here, *Ananda*, a monk abides contemplating the body as body, earnestly, clearly aware, mindful and having put away all hankering and fretting for the world, and likewise with

regard to feelings, mind, and mind-objects. That, *Ananda*, is how a monk lives as an island unto himself.”¹⁴⁸

Let us all understand this wonderful admonition of the Buddha and follow it with utmost respect for Our Buddha. In such a way, let us dedicate ourselves to practice this Dhamma. Let us apply this wonderful Dhamma into our daily life and be more and more mindful. That is the only way we can make a safe island and refuge for ourselves.

After his recovery, the Buddha again went to collect alms in the city of *Vesâli*. One day, after collecting alms and after the noon-meal he addressed Venerable *Ananda* and said, “Take up the mat *Ananda*, let us spend the day at the *Câpâla* Shrine.” Then, they both went to *Câpâla* shrine and sat down on the prepared seats. With *Ananda* beside him, the Buddha said, “*Ananda*, *Vesâli* is delightful, the *Udena* Shrine is delightful, the *Gotamaka* Shrine is delightful, the *Sattambaka* Shrine is delightful, the *Bahuputta* Shrine is delightful, the *Câpâla* Shrine is delightful. “Whosoever, *Ananda*, has developed, practiced, employed, strengthened, maintained, scrutinized, and brought to perfection the four constituents of psychic power could, if he so desired, remain throughout a world-period or until the end of it. The *Tathâgata*, *Ananda*, has done so. Therefore the *Tathâgata* could, if he so desired, remain throughout a world-period or more.”

However, the Venerable *Ananda* was unable to grasp the meaning of this statement of the Buddha because *Mâra* influenced his mind at that time. Otherwise he could have requested of the Buddha: “May the Lord remain throughout the world-period, for the welfare and happiness of multitudes, out of compassion for the world, for the benefit, well being and happiness of gods and men.” In accordance with the scripture, it so happened because at the time he was possessed and confused by *Mâra*. However, we all lost the opportunity to see the Buddha and listen to the Dhamma from his own lips. That itself is impermanence.

Then, the Buddha said, “*Ananda*, now it is time for you to leave and do as it seems fit to you.” Rising from his seat

regard to feelings, mind, and mind-objects. That, *Ananda*, is how a monk lives as an island unto himself.”¹⁴⁸

Let us all understand this wonderful admonition of the Buddha and follow it with utmost respect for Our Buddha. In such a way, let us dedicate ourselves to practice this Dhamma. Let us apply this wonderful Dhamma into our daily life and be more and more mindful. That is the only way we can make a safe island and refuge for ourselves.

After his recovery, the Buddha again went to collect alms in the city of *Vesâli*. One day, after collecting alms and after the noon-meal he addressed Venerable *Ananda* and said, “Take up the mat *Ananda*, let us spend the day at the *Câpâla* Shrine.” Then, they both went to *Câpâla* shrine and sat down on the prepared seats. With *Ananda* beside him, the Buddha said, “*Ananda*, *Vesâli* is delightful, the *Udena* Shrine is delightful, the *Gotamaka* Shrine is delightful, the *Sattambaka* Shrine is delightful, the *Bahuputta* Shrine is delightful, the *Câpâla* Shrine is delightful. “Whosoever, *Ananda*, has developed, practiced, employed, strengthened, maintained, scrutinized, and brought to perfection the four constituents of psychic power could, if he so desired, remain throughout a world-period or until the end of it. The *Tathâgata*, *Ananda*, has done so. Therefore the *Tathâgata* could, if he so desired, remain throughout a world-period or more.”

However, the Venerable *Ananda* was unable to grasp the meaning of this statement of the Buddha because *Mâra* influenced his mind at that time. Otherwise he could have requested of the Buddha: “May the Lord remain throughout the world-period, for the welfare and happiness of multitudes, out of compassion for the world, for the benefit, well being and happiness of gods and men.” In accordance with the scripture, it so happened because at the time he was possessed and confused by *Mâra*. However, we all lost the opportunity to see the Buddha and listen to the Dhamma from his own lips. That itself is impermanence.

Then, the Buddha said, “*Ananda*, now it is time for you to leave and do as it seems fit to you.” Rising from his seat

Venerable *Ananda* went aside and sat under a tree. Then, *Mâra* came to the Buddha and standing there he appealed, “Now, O Lord, let the Blessed One come to his final passing away; let the Happy One utterly pass away! The time has come for the *parinibbâna* of the Lord. The Blessed One, O Lord, spoke these words to me: ‘I shall not come to my final passing away, Evil One, until my *bhikkhus* and *bhikkhunis*, laymen and laywomen have come to be true disciples, wise, well disciplined, apt and learned, preservers of the Dhamma, living according to the Dhamma, abiding by the appropriate conduct, and having learned the Master’s word, are able to expound it, preach it, proclaim it, establish it, reveal it, explain it in detail, and make it clear; until, when adverse opinions arise, they shall be able to refute them thoroughly and well, and to preach this convincing and liberating Dhamma.’ And now, O Lord, *bhikkhus* and *bhikkhunis*, laymen and laywomen, have become the Blessed One’s disciples in just this way. So, O Lord, let the Blessed One come to his final passing away! The time has come for the *parinibbâna* of the Lord. For the Blessed One, O Lord, spoke these words to me: ‘I shall not come to my final passing away, Evil One, until this holy life taught by me has become successful, prosperous, far-renowned, popular, and widespread, until it is well proclaimed among gods and men.’ And this too has come to pass in just this way. So, O Lord, let the Blessed One come to his final passing away, let the Happy One utterly pass away! The time has come for the *parinibbâna* of the Lord.”¹⁴⁹

When this was said, the Buddha spoke to *Mâra*, saying, “Do not trouble yourself, Evil One. Before long the *parinibbâna* of the *Tathâgata* will come about. Three months hence the *Tathâgata* will utterly pass away.” Thus, Our Buddha at *Câpâla* Shrine, mindfully and clearly comprehending, renounced his will to live on. Upon this renouncing of the will to live on, there came a tremendous earthquake, dreadful and astonishing, and thunder rolled across the heavens. Then, Venerable *Ananda* came to the Buddha and asked the reason for the earthquake. The Buddha said, “There are eight

Venerable *Ananda* went aside and sat under a tree. Then, *Mâra* came to the Buddha and standing there he appealed, “Now, O Lord, let the Blessed One come to his final passing away; let the Happy One utterly pass away! The time has come for the *parinibbâna* of the Lord. The Blessed One, O Lord, spoke these words to me: ‘I shall not come to my final passing away, Evil One, until my *bhikkhus* and *bhikkhunis*, laymen and laywomen have come to be true disciples, wise, well disciplined, apt and learned, preservers of the Dhamma, living according to the Dhamma, abiding by the appropriate conduct, and having learned the Master’s word, are able to expound it, preach it, proclaim it, establish it, reveal it, explain it in detail, and make it clear; until, when adverse opinions arise, they shall be able to refute them thoroughly and well, and to preach this convincing and liberating Dhamma.’ And now, O Lord, *bhikkhus* and *bhikkhunis*, laymen and laywomen, have become the Blessed One’s disciples in just this way. So, O Lord, let the Blessed One come to his final passing away! The time has come for the *parinibbâna* of the Lord. For the Blessed One, O Lord, spoke these words to me: ‘I shall not come to my final passing away, Evil One, until this holy life taught by me has become successful, prosperous, far-renowned, popular, and widespread, until it is well proclaimed among gods and men.’ And this too has come to pass in just this way. So, O Lord, let the Blessed One come to his final passing away, let the Happy One utterly pass away! The time has come for the *parinibbâna* of the Lord.”¹⁴⁹

When this was said, the Buddha spoke to *Mâra*, saying, “Do not trouble yourself, Evil One. Before long the *parinibbâna* of the *Tathâgata* will come about. Three months hence the *Tathâgata* will utterly pass away.” Thus, Our Buddha at *Câpâla* Shrine, mindfully and clearly comprehending, renounced his will to live on. Upon this renouncing of the will to live on, there came a tremendous earthquake, dreadful and astonishing, and thunder rolled across the heavens. Then, Venerable *Ananda* came to the Buddha and asked the reason for the earthquake. The Buddha said, “There are eight

reasons, eight causes, *Ananda*, for a mighty earthquake to arise. What are those eight?

“This great earth, *Ananda*, is established upon liquid, the liquid upon the atmosphere, and the atmosphere upon space. And when, *Ananda*, mighty atmospheric disturbances take place, the liquid is agitated. And with the agitation of the liquid, tremors of the earth arise. This is the first reason, the first cause for the arising of mighty earthquakes.

“Again, *Ananda*, when an ascetic or holy man of great power, one who has gained mastery of his mind, or a deity who is mighty and potent, develops intense concentration on the delimited aspect of the earth element, and to a boundless degree on the liquid element, he, too, causes the earth to tremble, quiver, and shake. This is the second reason, the second cause for the arising of mighty earthquakes.

“Again, *Ananda*, when the *Bodhisatta* departs from the *Tusita* realm and descends into his mother's womb, mindfully and clearly comprehending; and when the *Bodhisatta* comes out from his mother's womb, mindfully and clearly comprehending; and when the *Tathâgata* becomes fully enlightened in unsurpassed, supreme enlightenment; when the *Tathâgata* sets rolling the excellent Wheel of the Dhamma; when the *Tathâgata* renounces his will to live on; and when the *Tathâgata* comes to pass away into the state of *Nibbâna* in which no element of clinging remains then, too, *Ananda*, this great earth trembles, quivers, and shakes. These, *Ananda*, are the eight reasons, the eight causes for a great earthquake to arise.”

Thereafter, the Buddha announced eight kinds of assemblies and eight kinds of liberations as well. Then, the Buddha said to Venerable *Ananda*, “*Ananda*, once while I was staying at *Uruvela* on the bank of the river *Neranjara*, under the goatherd's banyan-tree, just after attainment of the supreme enlightenment, *Mâra* came to me. Standing to one side he said, “May the Blessed One now attain final *Nibbâna*, may the Well-Farer now attain final *Nibbâna*. Now is the time for the Blessed One's final *Nibbâna*.” At that time I said, “I will

reasons, eight causes, *Ananda*, for a mighty earthquake to arise. What are those eight?

“This great earth, *Ananda*, is established upon liquid, the liquid upon the atmosphere, and the atmosphere upon space. And when, *Ananda*, mighty atmospheric disturbances take place, the liquid is agitated. And with the agitation of the liquid, tremors of the earth arise. This is the first reason, the first cause for the arising of mighty earthquakes.

“Again, *Ananda*, when an ascetic or holy man of great power, one who has gained mastery of his mind, or a deity who is mighty and potent, develops intense concentration on the delimited aspect of the earth element, and to a boundless degree on the liquid element, he, too, causes the earth to tremble, quiver, and shake. This is the second reason, the second cause for the arising of mighty earthquakes.

“Again, *Ananda*, when the *Bodhisatta* departs from the *Tusita* realm and descends into his mother's womb, mindfully and clearly comprehending; and when the *Bodhisatta* comes out from his mother's womb, mindfully and clearly comprehending; and when the *Tathâgata* becomes fully enlightened in unsurpassed, supreme enlightenment; when the *Tathâgata* sets rolling the excellent Wheel of the Dhamma; when the *Tathâgata* renounces his will to live on; and when the *Tathâgata* comes to pass away into the state of *Nibbâna* in which no element of clinging remains then, too, *Ananda*, this great earth trembles, quivers, and shakes. These, *Ananda*, are the eight reasons, the eight causes for a great earthquake to arise.”

Thereafter, the Buddha announced eight kinds of assemblies and eight kinds of liberations as well. Then, the Buddha said to Venerable *Ananda*, “*Ananda*, once while I was staying at *Uruvela* on the bank of the river *Neranjara*, under the goatherd's banyan-tree, just after attainment of the supreme enlightenment, *Mâra* came to me. Standing to one side he said, “May the Blessed One now attain final *Nibbâna*, may the Well-Farer now attain final *Nibbâna*. Now is the time for the Blessed One's final *Nibbâna*.” At that time I said, “I will

not take final *Nibbâna* till I have monks and disciples who are accomplished, trained, skilled, learned, knowers of the Dhamma, trained in conformity with the Dhamma, correctly trained and walking in the path of the Dhamma, who will pass on what they have gained from their teacher, teach it, declare it, establish it, expound it, analyze it, make it clear; till they shall be able by means of the Dhamma to refute false teachings that have arisen, and teach the Dhamma of wondrous effect. I will not take final *Nibbâna* till this holy life has been successfully established and flourishes, is widespread, well known far and wide, well-proclaimed among mankind every-where.”

“And just now today, *Ananda*, *Mâra* came to me and said, 'The Blessed One has such monks and disciples. May the Blessed One now attain final *Nibbâna*, may the Well-Farer now attain final *Nibbâna*. Now is the time for the Blessed One's final *Nibbâna*.' Therefore, *Ananda*, I said, “You need not worry, Evil One. The *Tathâgata*'s final passing will not be long delayed. Three months from now the *Tathâgata* will take final *Nibbâna*. So now, today, *Ananda*, here at the *Câpâla* Shrine, the *Tathâgata* has mindfully and in full awareness renounced the will to live.”

Then, Venerable *Ananda* requested, “O, Venerable sir, may the Blessed One stay for a complete world-period, may the Well-Farer stay for a world-period for the benefit and happiness of the multitude, out of compassion for the world, for the benefit and happiness of *devas* and humans!” The Buddha then said, “Enough, *Ananda*! Do not beg the *Tathâgata*, it is not the right time for that!” And a second and a third time the Venerable *Ananda* made the same request. “*Ananda* have you faith in the *Tathâgata*'s enlightenment?” the Buddha asked. “Yes, Venerable sir,” he said. “Then why do you bother the *Tathâgata* with your request up to three times?” the Buddha said.

“But Venerable sir, I have heard from the Blessed One's own lips, I have understood from the Blessed One's own lips: 'Whoever has developed the four roads to power ... could undoubtedly live for a world-period or more.’” The Buddha

not take final *Nibbâna* till I have monks and disciples who are accomplished, trained, skilled, learned, knowers of the Dhamma, trained in conformity with the Dhamma, correctly trained and walking in the path of the Dhamma, who will pass on what they have gained from their teacher, teach it, declare it, establish it, expound it, analyze it, make it clear; till they shall be able by means of the Dhamma to refute false teachings that have arisen, and teach the Dhamma of wondrous effect. I will not take final *Nibbâna* till this holy life has been successfully established and flourishes, is widespread, well known far and wide, well-proclaimed among mankind every-where.”

“And just now today, *Ananda*, *Mâra* came to me and said, 'The Blessed One has such monks and disciples. May the Blessed One now attain final *Nibbâna*, may the Well-Farer now attain final *Nibbâna*. Now is the time for the Blessed One's final *Nibbâna*.' Therefore, *Ananda*, I said, “You need not worry, Evil One. The *Tathâgata*'s final passing will not be long delayed. Three months from now the *Tathâgata* will take final *Nibbâna*. So now, today, *Ananda*, here at the *Câpâla* Shrine, the *Tathâgata* has mindfully and in full awareness renounced the will to live.”

Then, Venerable *Ananda* requested, “O, Venerable sir, may the Blessed One stay for a complete world-period, may the Well-Farer stay for a world-period for the benefit and happiness of the multitude, out of compassion for the world, for the benefit and happiness of *devas* and humans!” The Buddha then said, “Enough, *Ananda*! Do not beg the *Tathâgata*, it is not the right time for that!” And a second and a third time the Venerable *Ananda* made the same request. “*Ananda* have you faith in the *Tathâgata*'s enlightenment?” the Buddha asked. “Yes, Venerable sir,” he said. “Then why do you bother the *Tathâgata* with your request up to three times?” the Buddha said.

“But Venerable sir, I have heard from the Blessed One's own lips, I have understood from the Blessed One's own lips: 'Whoever has developed the four roads to power ... could undoubtedly live for a world-period or more.’” The Buddha

finally said, “*Ananda*, yours is the fault, yours is the failure that having been given such a broad hint, such a clear sign by the *Tathâgata*, you did not understand and did not beg the *Tathâgata* to stay for a world-period. If *Ananda*, you had begged him, the *Tathagata* would twice have refused you, but the third time he would have consented. Therefore, *Ananda* yours is the fault, yours is the failure.”

According to the sources, the Buddha gave this broad hint to Venerable *Ananda* several times. However, *Ananda* did not understand it. Finally, the Buddha accepted *Mâra*'s invitation. He then, decided to pass away on the full moon day of May.

Our Supreme Buddha said, “*Ananda*, all those things that are dear and pleasant to us must suffer, change, separation and alteration. So how could this be possible? Whatever is born, become, compounded, is liable to decay that it should not decay is impossible. And that has been renounced, given up, rejected, abandoned, forsaken: the *Tathâgata* has renounced the will to live. The *Tathâgata* has said, once and for all: 'The *Tathâgata*'s final passing will not be long delayed. Three months from now the *Tathâgata* will take final *Nibbâna*.' That the *Tathâgata* should withdraw such a declaration in order to live on, is not possible.”

Thereafter, the Buddha suggested to *Ananda* that they go to the peaked hall in the great woods, and so they went to the peaked hall. There the Buddha asked Venerable *Ananda* to gather together all the monks living in the vicinity of *Vesâli*. Venerable *Ananda* did so. When they all got there Our Buddha entered the assembly hall and sat down on the prepared seat. Then, addressing the monks he said, “Now, O *bhikkhus*, I say to you that these teachings of which I have direct knowledge and which I have made known to you these you should thoroughly learn, cultivate, develop, and frequently practice, that the life of purity may be established and may long endure, for the welfare and happiness of the multitude, out of compassion for the world, for the benefit, well being, and happiness of gods and men.

finally said, “*Ananda*, yours is the fault, yours is the failure that having been given such a broad hint, such a clear sign by the *Tathâgata*, you did not understand and did not beg the *Tathâgata* to stay for a world-period. If *Ananda*, you had begged him, the *Tathagata* would twice have refused you, but the third time he would have consented. Therefore, *Ananda* yours is the fault, yours is the failure.”

According to the sources, the Buddha gave this broad hint to Venerable *Ananda* several times. However, *Ananda* did not understand it. Finally, the Buddha accepted *Mâra*'s invitation. He then, decided to pass away on the full moon day of May.

Our Supreme Buddha said, “*Ananda*, all those things that are dear and pleasant to us must suffer, change, separation and alteration. So how could this be possible? Whatever is born, become, compounded, is liable to decay that it should not decay is impossible. And that has been renounced, given up, rejected, abandoned, forsaken: the *Tathâgata* has renounced the will to live. The *Tathâgata* has said, once and for all: 'The *Tathâgata*'s final passing will not be long delayed. Three months from now the *Tathâgata* will take final *Nibbâna*.' That the *Tathâgata* should withdraw such a declaration in order to live on, is not possible.”

Thereafter, the Buddha suggested to *Ananda* that they go to the peaked hall in the great woods, and so they went to the peaked hall. There the Buddha asked Venerable *Ananda* to gather together all the monks living in the vicinity of *Vesâli*. Venerable *Ananda* did so. When they all got there Our Buddha entered the assembly hall and sat down on the prepared seat. Then, addressing the monks he said, “Now, O *bhikkhus*, I say to you that these teachings of which I have direct knowledge and which I have made known to you these you should thoroughly learn, cultivate, develop, and frequently practice, that the life of purity may be established and may long endure, for the welfare and happiness of the multitude, out of compassion for the world, for the benefit, well being, and happiness of gods and men.

“And what, *bhikkhus*, are these teachings? They are the four foundations of mindfulness, the four right efforts, the four constituents of psychic power, the five faculties, the five powers, the seven factors of enlightenment, and the Noble Eightfold Path. These, *bhikkhus*, are the teachings of which I have direct knowledge, which I have made known to you, and which you should thoroughly learn, cultivate, develop, and frequently practice, that the life of purity may be established and may long endure, for the welfare and happiness of the multitude, out of compassion for the world, for the benefit, well being, and happiness of gods and men.”

This is what Our Buddha really taught us. Whenever we read and practice the Dhamma, we should read these Dhamma as they are and practice accordingly. There is no real Buddhism apart from this Dhamma. It was after this statement, this proclamation about the Dhamma, that Our Buddha addressed the monks and said the well-known last admonition of the Buddha: “O monks, now I address you. All conditioned things are impermanent. Strive on with diligence! *Tathâgata's* final passing away will take place before long.” The Buddha further said on this occasion, “Monks, my years are now fully ripe, the life span left is short. Departing, I go hence from you, relying on myself alone. Be earnest, then O Monks, be mindful and of virtue pure! With firm resolve, guard your own mind! Whoso untiringly pursues the Dhamma and the Discipline, shall go beyond the round of births and make an end of suffering.”

Then, Our Buddha left *Vesâli*. That was certainly a sorrowful moment. On that day, before noon, Our Buddha went from house to house collecting alms. After his meal, he addressed Venerable *Ananda*. “*Ananda* this is the last time that the *Tathâgata* sees *Vesâli*. *Ananda* let us now go to *Bhandagâma*.”

Thereafter, Our Buddha together with Venerable *Ananda* and the retinue of monks went to *Bhandagama*. There he again addressed the monks and said, “Monks, it was because of not understanding, not penetrating these four factors of Dhamma that you as well as I, have been running and wandering in

“And what, *bhikkhus*, are these teachings? They are the four foundations of mindfulness, the four right efforts, the four constituents of psychic power, the five faculties, the five powers, the seven factors of enlightenment, and the Noble Eightfold Path. These, *bhikkhus*, are the teachings of which I have direct knowledge, which I have made known to you, and which you should thoroughly learn, cultivate, develop, and frequently practice, that the life of purity may be established and may long endure, for the welfare and happiness of the multitude, out of compassion for the world, for the benefit, well being, and happiness of gods and men.”

This is what Our Buddha really taught us. Whenever we read and practice the Dhamma, we should read these Dhamma as they are and practice accordingly. There is no real Buddhism apart from this Dhamma. It was after this statement, this proclamation about the Dhamma, that Our Buddha addressed the monks and said the well-known last admonition of the Buddha: “O monks, now I address you. All conditioned things are impermanent. Strive on with diligence! *Tathâgata's* final passing away will take place before long.” The Buddha further said on this occasion, “Monks, my years are now fully ripe, the life span left is short. Departing, I go hence from you, relying on myself alone. Be earnest, then O Monks, be mindful and of virtue pure! With firm resolve, guard your own mind! Whoso untiringly pursues the Dhamma and the Discipline, shall go beyond the round of births and make an end of suffering.”

Then, Our Buddha left *Vesâli*. That was certainly a sorrowful moment. On that day, before noon, Our Buddha went from house to house collecting alms. After his meal, he addressed Venerable *Ananda*. “*Ananda* this is the last time that the *Tathâgata* sees *Vesâli*. *Ananda* let us now go to *Bhandagâma*.”

Thereafter, Our Buddha together with Venerable *Ananda* and the retinue of monks went to *Bhandagama*. There he again addressed the monks and said, “Monks, it was because of not understanding, not penetrating these four factors of Dhamma that you as well as I, have been running and wandering in

samsâra. What are the four? The noble virtue, noble concentration, noble wisdom and noble liberation.”

Our Buddha lived for sometime at *Bhandagâma* and then, together with his disciples, went to *Hatthigâma*, *Ambagâma*, *Jambugâma*, and *Bhoganagara* respectively. There, the Buddha lived at the *Ananda Shrine* at *Bhoganagara*. It was at this place Our Buddha taught us the four great references, criteria (*mahâ apadesa*). The Buddha said:

“Suppose a monk were to say: 'Friends, I heard and received this from the Lord's own lips: this is the Dhamma, this is the discipline, this is the Master's teaching,' then monks, you should neither approve nor disapprove his words. Then, without approving or disapproving his word and expression, should be carefully noted and compared with the *suttas* and reviewed in the light of the discipline. If they, on such comparison and review, are found not to conform to the *suttas* or the discipline, the conclusion must be: “Assuredly, this is not the word of the Buddha, it has been wrongly understood by this monk” and the matter is to be rejected. But whereon such comparison and review they are found to conform to the *suttas* or the discipline, the conclusion must be: “Assuredly, this is the word of the Buddha, it has been rightly understood by this monk.” This is the first criterion.

“Suppose a monk were to say: 'In such and such a place there is a community with elders and distinguished teachers. I have heard and received this from that community,' then monks, you should neither approve nor disapprove his words... That is the second criterion.

“Suppose a monk were to say: 'In such and such a place there are many elders who are learned, bearers of the tradition, who know the Dhamma, the discipline, the code of rules'... This is the third criterion.

“Suppose, a monk were to say: 'In such and such a place there is one elder who is learned... I have heard and received this from that elder'... But whereon such a comparison and review they are found to conform to the *suttas* and the discipline, then

samsâra. What are the four? The noble virtue, noble concentration, noble wisdom and noble liberation.”

Our Buddha lived for sometime at *Bhandagâma* and then, together with his disciples, went to *Hatthigâma*, *Ambagâma*, *Jambugâma*, and *Bhoganagara* respectively. There, the Buddha lived at the *Ananda Shrine* at *Bhoganagara*. It was at this place Our Buddha taught us the four great references, criteria (*mahâ apadesa*). The Buddha said:

“Suppose a monk were to say: 'Friends, I heard and received this from the Lord's own lips: this is the Dhamma, this is the discipline, this is the Master's teaching,' then monks, you should neither approve nor disapprove his words. Then, without approving or disapproving his word and expression, should be carefully noted and compared with the *suttas* and reviewed in the light of the discipline. If they, on such comparison and review, are found not to conform to the *suttas* or the discipline, the conclusion must be: “Assuredly, this is not the word of the Buddha, it has been wrongly understood by this monk” and the matter is to be rejected. But whereon such comparison and review they are found to conform to the *suttas* or the discipline, the conclusion must be: “Assuredly, this is the word of the Buddha, it has been rightly understood by this monk.” This is the first criterion.

“Suppose a monk were to say: 'In such and such a place there is a community with elders and distinguished teachers. I have heard and received this from that community,' then monks, you should neither approve nor disapprove his words... That is the second criterion.

“Suppose a monk were to say: 'In such and such a place there are many elders who are learned, bearers of the tradition, who know the Dhamma, the discipline, the code of rules'... This is the third criterion.

“Suppose, a monk were to say: 'In such and such a place there is one elder who is learned... I have heard and received this from that elder'... But whereon such a comparison and review they are found to conform to the *suttas* and the discipline, then

the conclusion must be: “Assuredly, this is the word of the Buddha, it has been rightly understood by this monk.”

Among teachers, this is really, a wonderful teaching. The Buddha grants his followers extensive freedom of thought. Is there any other religious teaching that gives that much freedom for followers?

While staying at *Bhoganagara*, Our Buddha delivered a comprehensive discourse on morality, concentration, and wisdom. From there, he went with a great retinue of monks to the city called *Pâvâ*. When Our Buddha approached *Pâvâ*, he stayed in the mango grove of *Cunda* the smith's son. Having heard that the Buddha had arrived in his mango grove, *Cunda* was delighted. He came to see the Buddha and listened to the Dhamma. At the end of the Dhamma talk, he invited the Buddha and all his disciples to have the noon-meal at his home on the following day. Our Buddha accepted his invitation as usual in silence.

On the following day, Our Buddha, together with his disciples, went to *Cunda's* home for the noon-meal. There were many dishes prepared for the meal. Especially there was a prepared dish called *sukaramaddava*. This was a special dish made for the Buddha himself. It is simply a dish of mushrooms grown where pigs had been raised. As some knowledgeable people and monks say, *sukara* means pig. *Maddava* is a type of mushroom. Even today, in Nepal and India, people use this kind of mushroom. This may be served as mushrooms or jello. Because of the name, some mistake it for a kind of meat, particularly pork. The word *maddava* means something tender, very soft. Our Buddha went for alms and addressing *Cunda* said, “*Cunda*, whatever the *sukaramaddava* dish [you] prepared, it would be better that you offer it to me [alone]; all other things offer to the *bhikkhu* Sangha.” [That is a clear statement for us to contemplate: whether the Buddha knowingly agreed to consume the fatally tainted dish, but wanted to prevent his followers from doing so.]

the conclusion must be: “Assuredly, this is the word of the Buddha, it has been rightly understood by this monk.”

Among teachers, this is really, a wonderful teaching. The Buddha grants his followers extensive freedom of thought. Is there any other religious teaching that gives that much freedom for followers?

While staying at *Bhoganagara*, Our Buddha delivered a comprehensive discourse on morality, concentration, and wisdom. From there, he went with a great retinue of monks to the city called *Pâvâ*. When Our Buddha approached *Pâvâ*, he stayed in the mango grove of *Cunda* the smith's son. Having heard that the Buddha had arrived in his mango grove, *Cunda* was delighted. He came to see the Buddha and listened to the Dhamma. At the end of the Dhamma talk, he invited the Buddha and all his disciples to have the noon-meal at his home on the following day. Our Buddha accepted his invitation as usual in silence.

On the following day, Our Buddha, together with his disciples, went to *Cunda's* home for the noon-meal. There were many dishes prepared for the meal. Especially there was a prepared dish called *sukaramaddava*. This was a special dish made for the Buddha himself. It is simply a dish of mushrooms grown where pigs had been raised. As some knowledgeable people and monks say, *sukara* means pig. *Maddava* is a type of mushroom. Even today, in Nepal and India, people use this kind of mushroom. This may be served as mushrooms or jello. Because of the name, some mistake it for a kind of meat, particularly pork. The word *maddava* means something tender, very soft. Our Buddha went for alms and addressing *Cunda* said, “*Cunda*, whatever the *sukaramaddava* dish [you] prepared, it would be better that you offer it to me [alone]; all other things offer to the *bhikkhu* Sangha.” [That is a clear statement for us to contemplate: whether the Buddha knowingly agreed to consume the fatally tainted dish, but wanted to prevent his followers from doing so.]

Thus, *Cunda* did as the Buddha asked him. After Buddha's meal, what was left over he disposed of. Because, as the Buddha himself said, no one else among *devâs*, humans, recluses, or *brahmins* should eat it and digest it other than the Buddha. Actually, *Cunda* put it into a lake as the Buddha instructed him.

After the meal offered by *Cunda*, Our Buddha became gravely ill. It was a severe case of dysentery. He suffered sharp and deadly pains. However, Our Buddha endured them mindfully and clearly comprehending with an unperturbed mind.

Thereafter, Our Buddha addressed Venerable *Ananda* and said, “*Ananda*, let us now go to *Kusinârâ*.” On the way to *Kusinârâ*, Our Buddha was not steady enough to walk. He was thirsty. He then went beside the highway, stopped at the foot of a tree and said, “*Ananda*, please fold my upper robe into four and lay it down. I am weary and want to rest awhile.”

Venerable *Ananda* folded the robe in four and laid it down. Our Buddha sat down on the seat prepared for him and said, “*Ananda*, please bring me some water. I am thirsty and want to drink.”

Venerable *Ananda* then said, “*Bhante*, just now, five hundred carts passed through the stream and the water in the stream is muddy and impure, [you] cannot drink. Shall we go little further? The river *Kukuttha* is only a little way ahead. We can both drink pure water and take an ablution.” Again, the Buddha a second time asked for some water. *Ananda* gave the same answer. The third time Buddha asked for water. Then, Venerable *Ananda* took a bowl to fetch some water from a nearby stream. The water in the stream was as clear as glass. Being delighted, he brought some water and offered it to the Buddha. Our Buddha drank the water to quench his thirst.

Having taken enough water, the Buddha rested under a tree. Then, a wanderer named *Pukkusâti*, one of the disciples of *Alâra Kâlâma*, a son of *Malla*, approached the Buddha and after a short discussion offered two golden robes; one for the

Thus, *Cunda* did as the Buddha asked him. After Buddha's meal, what was left over he disposed of. Because, as the Buddha himself said, no one else among *devâs*, humans, recluses, or *brahmins* should eat it and digest it other than the Buddha. Actually, *Cunda* put it into a lake as the Buddha instructed him.

After the meal offered by *Cunda*, Our Buddha became gravely ill. It was a severe case of dysentery. He suffered sharp and deadly pains. However, Our Buddha endured them mindfully and clearly comprehending with an unperturbed mind.

Thereafter, Our Buddha addressed Venerable *Ananda* and said, “*Ananda*, let us now go to *Kusinârâ*.” On the way to *Kusinârâ*, Our Buddha was not steady enough to walk. He was thirsty. He then went beside the highway, stopped at the foot of a tree and said, “*Ananda*, please fold my upper robe into four and lay it down. I am weary and want to rest awhile.”

Venerable *Ananda* folded the robe in four and laid it down. Our Buddha sat down on the seat prepared for him and said, “*Ananda*, please bring me some water. I am thirsty and want to drink.”

Venerable *Ananda* then said, “*Bhante*, just now, five hundred carts passed through the stream and the water in the stream is muddy and impure, [you] cannot drink. Shall we go little further? The river *Kukuttha* is only a little way ahead. We can both drink pure water and take an ablution.” Again, the Buddha a second time asked for some water. *Ananda* gave the same answer. The third time Buddha asked for water. Then, Venerable *Ananda* took a bowl to fetch some water from a nearby stream. The water in the stream was as clear as glass. Being delighted, he brought some water and offered it to the Buddha. Our Buddha drank the water to quench his thirst.

Having taken enough water, the Buddha rested under a tree. Then, a wanderer named *Pukkusâti*, one of the disciples of *Alâra Kâlâma*, a son of *Malla*, approached the Buddha and after a short discussion offered two golden robes; one for the

Buddha and one for the Venerable *Ananda*. He paid his respects to both and departed.

Thereafter, the Buddha resumed his journey to *Kusinârâ* with the retinue of his disciples. They reached the river *Kukuttha* where they had a good bath and drank clear water. After bathing, they then went to a mango grove, beside the river. In the mango grove the Buddha addressed Venerable *Cunda*, “*Cunda*, please fold my upper robe into four and spread it. I feel dizziness. I need to lie down for a while.” Venerable *Cunda* did so and Our Supreme Buddha lay down in his usual lion's posture with mindfulness and clear comprehension. Venerable *Cunda* was sitting just in front of the Buddha.

Again, the Buddha addressed Venerable *Ananda*, “*Ananda*, it may come to pass that *Cunda* might think or someone will cause remorse to *Cunda* the smith, saying: 'It is no gain to you, friend *Cunda*, but a loss, that it was from you the *Tathâgata* took his last alms meal, and then came to his end.' Then, *Ananda*, the remorse of *Cunda* should be dispelled after this manner: 'It is a gain to you, friend *Cunda*, a blessing that the *Tathâgata* took his last alms meal from you, and then came to his end. For, friend, face to face with the Blessed One I have heard and learned: 'There are two offerings of food which are of equal fruition, of equal outcome, exceeding in grandeur the fruition and result of any other offerings of food. Which two? The one partaken of by the *Tathâgata* before becoming fully enlightened in unsurpassed, supreme enlightenment; and the one partaken of by the *Tathâgata* before passing into the state of *Nibbâna* in which no element of clinging remains.' By his deed the worthy *Cunda* has accumulated merit which makes for long life, beauty, well being, glory, heavenly rebirth, and sovereignty.”

Now getting closer and closer to *Kusinârâ*, Our Buddha said, “*Ananda*, *Kusinârâ* is on the other shore of the river *Hiranyawati*. Let's now go there to the *sâla* grove of *Mallas*.” Suggesting this, Our Buddha, together with his retinue of disciples, went to the *Upavattana Sala* grove of *Mallas*. In the grove the Buddha addressed Venerable *Ananda*, “*Ananda*, now please arrange a seat for me here between these two *sâla*

Buddha and one for the Venerable *Ananda*. He paid his respects to both and departed.

Thereafter, the Buddha resumed his journey to *Kusinârâ* with the retinue of his disciples. They reached the river *Kukuttha* where they had a good bath and drank clear water. After bathing, they then went to a mango grove, beside the river. In the mango grove the Buddha addressed Venerable *Cunda*, “*Cunda*, please fold my upper robe into four and spread it. I feel dizziness. I need to lie down for a while.” Venerable *Cunda* did so and Our Supreme Buddha lay down in his usual lion's posture with mindfulness and clear comprehension. Venerable *Cunda* was sitting just in front of the Buddha.

Again, the Buddha addressed Venerable *Ananda*, “*Ananda*, it may come to pass that *Cunda* might think or someone will cause remorse to *Cunda* the smith, saying: 'It is no gain to you, friend *Cunda*, but a loss, that it was from you the *Tathâgata* took his last alms meal, and then came to his end.' Then, *Ananda*, the remorse of *Cunda* should be dispelled after this manner: 'It is a gain to you, friend *Cunda*, a blessing that the *Tathâgata* took his last alms meal from you, and then came to his end. For, friend, face to face with the Blessed One I have heard and learned: 'There are two offerings of food which are of equal fruition, of equal outcome, exceeding in grandeur the fruition and result of any other offerings of food. Which two? The one partaken of by the *Tathâgata* before becoming fully enlightened in unsurpassed, supreme enlightenment; and the one partaken of by the *Tathâgata* before passing into the state of *Nibbâna* in which no element of clinging remains.' By his deed the worthy *Cunda* has accumulated merit which makes for long life, beauty, well being, glory, heavenly rebirth, and sovereignty.”

Now getting closer and closer to *Kusinârâ*, Our Buddha said, “*Ananda*, *Kusinârâ* is on the other shore of the river *Hiranyawati*. Let's now go there to the *sâla* grove of *Mallas*.” Suggesting this, Our Buddha, together with his retinue of disciples, went to the *Upavattana Sala* grove of *Mallas*. In the grove the Buddha addressed Venerable *Ananda*, “*Ananda*, now please arrange a seat for me here between these two *sâla*

trees to keep the head towards the North. *Ananda* I feel weak and dizzy. I need to lie-down.” Venerable *Ananda* did so.

The Buddha lay down on his right side in the lion-posture, placing one foot on the other, mindfully and clearly comprehending. Those twin *sâla* trees burst forth into an abundance of untimely blossoms, which fell upon the Buddha's body sprinkling and covering it in homage. Divine coral-tree flowers fell from the sky, divine sandalwood powder fell from the sky, sprinkling and covering the Buddha's body in homage. Divine music and song sounded from the sky in homage to the Buddha. The Buddha then said, “*Ananda*, these *sâla* trees have burst forth into an abundance of untimely blossoms which fell upon the *Tathâgata*'s body sprinkling and covering it in homage... Never before has the *Tathâgata* been so honored, revered, esteemed, worshiped, and adored. And yet, *Ananda*, whatever monk, nun, male or female lay-follower dwells practicing the Dhamma properly, and perfectly fulfills the Dhamma-way, he or she honors the *Tathâgata*, reveres and esteems him and pays him the supreme homage. Therefore, *Ananda*, 'We will dwell practicing the Dhamma properly and perfectly fulfill the Dhamma-way' this must be your watchword.”

Now, Our Buddha is about to pass away into *parinibbâna*. Thousands of mighty *devas* have assembled to pay their last respects to the Buddha. The *Mallas'* *sâla* grove which was about eighty-four miles [in area] had no space even to touch with the tip of a hair that was not filled with mighty *devas*, and they are grumbling: “We have come a long way to see the *Tathâgata*. It is rare for a *Tathâgata*, a fully enlightened Buddha, to arise in the world, and tonight in the last watch the *Tathâgata* will attain final *Nibbâna*, and this mighty monk is standing in front of the Lord, preventing us from getting a last glimpse of the *Tathâgata*.”

This complaint was because Venerable *Upavâna* was just in front of the Buddha fanning him. Therefore, the Buddha advised him to step aside. As Venerable *Ananda* could not understand why the Buddha had said so, he asked him why. Then, the Buddha disclosed that the reason was that

trees to keep the head towards the North. *Ananda* I feel weak and dizzy. I need to lie-down.” Venerable *Ananda* did so.

The Buddha lay down on his right side in the lion-posture, placing one foot on the other, mindfully and clearly comprehending. Those twin *sâla* trees burst forth into an abundance of untimely blossoms, which fell upon the Buddha's body sprinkling and covering it in homage. Divine coral-tree flowers fell from the sky, divine sandalwood powder fell from the sky, sprinkling and covering the Buddha's body in homage. Divine music and song sounded from the sky in homage to the Buddha. The Buddha then said, “*Ananda*, these *sâla* trees have burst forth into an abundance of untimely blossoms which fell upon the *Tathâgata*'s body sprinkling and covering it in homage... Never before has the *Tathâgata* been so honored, revered, esteemed, worshiped, and adored. And yet, *Ananda*, whatever monk, nun, male or female lay-follower dwells practicing the Dhamma properly, and perfectly fulfills the Dhamma-way, he or she honors the *Tathâgata*, reveres and esteems him and pays him the supreme homage. Therefore, *Ananda*, 'We will dwell practicing the Dhamma properly and perfectly fulfill the Dhamma-way' this must be your watchword.”

Now, Our Buddha is about to pass away into *parinibbâna*. Thousands of mighty *devas* have assembled to pay their last respects to the Buddha. The *Mallas'* *sâla* grove which was about eighty-four miles [in area] had no space even to touch with the tip of a hair that was not filled with mighty *devas*, and they are grumbling: “We have come a long way to see the *Tathâgata*. It is rare for a *Tathâgata*, a fully enlightened Buddha, to arise in the world, and tonight in the last watch the *Tathâgata* will attain final *Nibbâna*, and this mighty monk is standing in front of the Lord, preventing us from getting a last glimpse of the *Tathâgata*.”

This complaint was because Venerable *Upavâna* was just in front of the Buddha fanning him. Therefore, the Buddha advised him to step aside. As Venerable *Ananda* could not understand why the Buddha had said so, he asked him why. Then, the Buddha disclosed that the reason was that

Venerable *Upavâna* was covering the Buddha to the mighty *devâs*. Venerable *Ananda* then asked what kinds of *devâs* the Lord perceived.

The Buddha said, “*Ananda*, there are sky-*devâs* whose minds are earth-bound, they are weeping and tearing their hair, raising their arms, throwing themselves down and twisting and turning, crying: “All too soon the Blessed Lord is passing away, all too soon the Well-Farer is passing away, all too soon the Eye of the World is disappearing! And there are earth-*devâs* whose minds are earth-bound, who do likewise. But those *devâs* who are free from craving endure patiently, saying: “All compounded things are impermanent what is the use of this?”

Thereafter, the Buddha recommended the four places the sight of which should arouse sober sense of urgency in the faithful devotees. Those four are: The place where the Buddha was born, the place where the Buddha attained supreme enlightenment, the place where the Buddha delivered his first sermon and the place where the Buddha passed away.

Then, the Venerable *Ananda* said to the Blessed One: “How, Lord, should we conduct ourselves towards women?”

"Do not see them, *Ananda*."

"But, Lord, if we do see them?"

"Do not speak, *Ananda*."

"But, Venerable sir, if they should speak to us?"

"Then, *Ananda*, you should establish mindfulness."

Then, the Venerable *Ananda* said, "How should we act, Venerable sir, respecting the body of the *Tathâgata*?"

“Do not hinder yourselves, *Ananda*, to honor the body of the *Tathâgata*. Rather you should strive, *Ananda*, and be zealous on your own behalf, for your own good. Unflinchingly, ardently, and resolutely you should apply yourselves to your own good. For there are, *Ananda*, wise nobles, wise *brahmins*, and wise householders who are devoted to the

Venerable *Upavâna* was covering the Buddha to the mighty *devâs*. Venerable *Ananda* then asked what kinds of *devâs* the Lord perceived.

The Buddha said, “*Ananda*, there are sky-*devâs* whose minds are earth-bound, they are weeping and tearing their hair, raising their arms, throwing themselves down and twisting and turning, crying: “All too soon the Blessed Lord is passing away, all too soon the Well-Farer is passing away, all too soon the Eye of the World is disappearing! And there are earth-*devâs* whose minds are earth-bound, who do likewise. But those *devâs* who are free from craving endure patiently, saying: “All compounded things are impermanent what is the use of this?”

Thereafter, the Buddha recommended the four places the sight of which should arouse sober sense of urgency in the faithful devotees. Those four are: The place where the Buddha was born, the place where the Buddha attained supreme enlightenment, the place where the Buddha delivered his first sermon and the place where the Buddha passed away.

Then, the Venerable *Ananda* said to the Blessed One: “How, Lord, should we conduct ourselves towards women?”

"Do not see them, *Ananda*."

"But, Lord, if we do see them?"

"Do not speak, *Ananda*."

"But, Venerable sir, if they should speak to us?"

"Then, *Ananda*, you should establish mindfulness."

Then, the Venerable *Ananda* said, "How should we act, Venerable sir, respecting the body of the *Tathâgata*?"

“Do not hinder yourselves, *Ananda*, to honor the body of the *Tathâgata*. Rather you should strive, *Ananda*, and be zealous on your own behalf, for your own good. Unflinchingly, ardently, and resolutely you should apply yourselves to your own good. For there are, *Ananda*, wise nobles, wise *brahmins*, and wise householders who are devoted to the

Tathâgata, and it is they who will render the honor to the body of the *Tathâgata*.”

Thereafter, the Buddha announced four persons who are worthy to be respected by erecting pagodas. They are the supremely enlightened ones, silent Buddhas, enlightened ones, and the universal monarchs.

At this time, Venerable *Ananda* was not with the Buddha. He had gone to the *vihâra*, and was leaning against the doorpost and weeping. “I am still but a learner, and still have to strive for my own perfection. But, alas, my Master, who was so compassionate towards me, is about to pass away!” The Buddha asked, “Where *bhikkhus*, is *Ananda*?” “The Venerable *Ananda*, sir, has gone into the *vihâra* and there stands leaning against the door post and weeping, ‘I am still but a learner, and still have to strive for my own perfection. But, alas, my Master, who was so compassionate towards me, is about to pass away!’”

Then, the Buddha asked a certain monk to bring the Venerable *Ananda* to him. Venerable *Ananda* came and bowed down to the Buddha and sat down on one side. The Buddha then said, “Enough, *Ananda*! Do not grieve. Do not lament! For have I not taught from the very beginning that with all that is dear and beloved there must be change, separation, and severance? Of that which is born, come into being, compounded, and subject to decay, how can one say: ‘May it not come to dissolution!’? There can be no such state of things. Now for a long time, *Ananda*, you have served the *Tathâgata* with loving-friendliness in deed, word, and thought, graciously, pleasantly, with a whole heart, and beyond measure. Great food have you gathered, *Ananda*! Now you should put forth energy, and soon you too will be free from the taints.”

It was after this that the Buddha compared the four wonderful and marvelous qualities of Venerable *Ananda* with the four such qualities of a universal monarch and delivered a special talk.

Venerable *Ananda* then said, “Let it not be, Venerable sir, that

Tathâgata, and it is they who will render the honor to the body of the *Tathâgata*.”

Thereafter, the Buddha announced four persons who are worthy to be respected by erecting pagodas. They are the supremely enlightened ones, silent Buddhas, enlightened ones, and the universal monarchs.

At this time, Venerable *Ananda* was not with the Buddha. He had gone to the *vihâra*, and was leaning against the doorpost and weeping. “I am still but a learner, and still have to strive for my own perfection. But, alas, my Master, who was so compassionate towards me, is about to pass away!” The Buddha asked, “Where *bhikkhus*, is *Ananda*?” “The Venerable *Ananda*, sir, has gone into the *vihâra* and there stands leaning against the door post and weeping, ‘I am still but a learner, and still have to strive for my own perfection. But, alas, my Master, who was so compassionate towards me, is about to pass away!’”

Then, the Buddha asked a certain monk to bring the Venerable *Ananda* to him. Venerable *Ananda* came and bowed down to the Buddha and sat down on one side. The Buddha then said, “Enough, *Ananda*! Do not grieve. Do not lament! For have I not taught from the very beginning that with all that is dear and beloved there must be change, separation, and severance? Of that which is born, come into being, compounded, and subject to decay, how can one say: ‘May it not come to dissolution!’? There can be no such state of things. Now for a long time, *Ananda*, you have served the *Tathâgata* with loving-friendliness in deed, word, and thought, graciously, pleasantly, with a whole heart, and beyond measure. Great food have you gathered, *Ananda*! Now you should put forth energy, and soon you too will be free from the taints.”

It was after this that the Buddha compared the four wonderful and marvelous qualities of Venerable *Ananda* with the four such qualities of a universal monarch and delivered a special talk.

Venerable *Ananda* then said, “Let it not be, Venerable sir, that

the Blessed One should pass away in this mean place, this uncivilized township in the midst of the jungle, a mere outpost of the province. There are great cities, Venerable sir, such as *Campa*, *Râjagaha*, *Sâvatthi*, *Sâketa*, *Kosambi*, and *Benares*. Let the Blessed One have his final passing away in one of those.” On hearing this, Buddha delivered the *Mahâ Sudassana Sutta* and explained how the city of *Kusinârâ* was formerly prosperous.

Then, the Buddha addressing the Venerable *Ananda* said, “Go now, *Ananda*, to *Kusinârâ* and announce to the *Mallas*: 'Today, *Vasetthâs*, in the last watch of the night, the *Tathâgata's parinibbâna* will take place. Approach, O *Vasetthâs*, draw near! Do not be remorseful later at the thought: In our township it was that the *Tathâgata's parinibbâna* took place, but we failed to see him at the end!’” Venerable *Ananda* went to *Kusinârâ* with a companion and met the *Mallas* of *Kusinârâ* and announced, “Today, *Vasetthâs*, in the last watch of the night, the *Tathâgata's parinibbâna* will take place. Approach, *Vasetthâs*, draw near! Do not be remorseful later at the thought: 'In our township it was that the *Tathâgata's parinibbâna* took place, but we failed to see him at the end.’”

On hearing this, they all, with their sons, their wives, and the wives of their sons, were sorely grieved, grieved at heart and afflicted; and some with their hair all disheveled, with arms uplifted in despair, wept; flinging themselves on the ground, they rolled from side to side, lamenting: “Too soon has the Blessed One come to his *parinibbâna*! Too soon has the Happy One come to his *parinibbâna*! Too soon will the Eye of the World vanish from sight!” and came to see and respect the Buddha before his passing away. Venerable *Ananda* let them in to see and respect the Buddha one by one. However, later on, he realized that it might take long time. Therefore, he asked them to visit in groups.

Then, a wandering ascetic *Subhadda*, having heard that the Buddha would be passing away on this day, came to see the Buddha and asked permission from Venerable *Ananda*. Venerable *Ananda* on the first time and the second time,

the Blessed One should pass away in this mean place, this uncivilized township in the midst of the jungle, a mere outpost of the province. There are great cities, Venerable sir, such as *Campa*, *Râjagaha*, *Sâvatthi*, *Sâketa*, *Kosambi*, and *Benares*. Let the Blessed One have his final passing away in one of those.” On hearing this, Buddha delivered the *Mahâ Sudassana Sutta* and explained how the city of *Kusinârâ* was formerly prosperous.

Then, the Buddha addressing the Venerable *Ananda* said, “Go now, *Ananda*, to *Kusinârâ* and announce to the *Mallas*: 'Today, *Vasetthâs*, in the last watch of the night, the *Tathâgata's parinibbâna* will take place. Approach, O *Vasetthâs*, draw near! Do not be remorseful later at the thought: In our township it was that the *Tathâgata's parinibbâna* took place, but we failed to see him at the end!’” Venerable *Ananda* went to *Kusinârâ* with a companion and met the *Mallas* of *Kusinârâ* and announced, “Today, *Vasetthâs*, in the last watch of the night, the *Tathâgata's parinibbâna* will take place. Approach, *Vasetthâs*, draw near! Do not be remorseful later at the thought: 'In our township it was that the *Tathâgata's parinibbâna* took place, but we failed to see him at the end.’”

On hearing this, they all, with their sons, their wives, and the wives of their sons, were sorely grieved, grieved at heart and afflicted; and some with their hair all disheveled, with arms uplifted in despair, wept; flinging themselves on the ground, they rolled from side to side, lamenting: “Too soon has the Blessed One come to his *parinibbâna*! Too soon has the Happy One come to his *parinibbâna*! Too soon will the Eye of the World vanish from sight!” and came to see and respect the Buddha before his passing away. Venerable *Ananda* let them in to see and respect the Buddha one by one. However, later on, he realized that it might take long time. Therefore, he asked them to visit in groups.

Then, a wandering ascetic *Subhadda*, having heard that the Buddha would be passing away on this day, came to see the Buddha and asked permission from Venerable *Ananda*. Venerable *Ananda* on the first time and the second time,

refused his request considering the Buddha's condition. However, the Buddha overheard their conversation and asked Venerable *Ananda* to let him come and ask his questions. Thereafter, he went to the Buddha and asked, “There are, Venerable *Gotama*, ascetics and *brahmins* who are heads of great companies of disciples, who have large retinues, who are leaders of schools, well known and renowned, and held in high esteem by the multitude, such teachers as *Purana Kassapa*, *Makkhali Gosâla*, *Ajita Kesakambali*, *Pakudha Kaccâyana*, *Saṅjaya Belatthaputta*, *Nigantha Nâtaputta*. Have all of these attained realization, as each of them would have it believed, or has none of them, or is it that some have attained realization and others not?” Our Buddha then said, “Enough, *Subhadda*! Let it be as it may, whether all of them have attained realization, as each of them would have it believed, or whether none of them has, or whether some have attained realization and others not. I will teach you the Dhamma, *Subhadda*; listen and heed it well, and I will speak.”

Thereafter, Our Buddha taught him the Dhamma. He said, “In whatsoever Dhamma and Discipline, *Subhadda*, there is not found the Noble Eightfold Path, neither is there found a true ascetic of the first, second, third, or fourth degree of saintliness. But in whatsoever Dhamma and Discipline there is found the Noble Eightfold Path, there is found a true ascetic of the first, second, third, and fourth degrees of saintliness. Now, in this Dhamma and Discipline, *Subhadda*, is found the Noble Eightfold Path; and in it alone are also found true ascetics of the first, second, third, and fourth degrees of saintliness. Devoid of true ascetics are the systems of other teachers. But if, *Subhadda*, the *bhikkhus* live righteously, the world will not be destitute of *arahants*.”

Then, the Buddha, addressing Venerable *Ananda* said, “It may be, *Ananda*, that to some among you, the thought will come: 'Ended is the word of the Master; we have a Master no longer.' But it should not, *Ananda*, be so considered. For that which I have proclaimed and made known as the Dhamma and the Discipline, that shall be your Master when I am gone.

refused his request considering the Buddha's condition. However, the Buddha overheard their conversation and asked Venerable *Ananda* to let him come and ask his questions. Thereafter, he went to the Buddha and asked, “There are, Venerable *Gotama*, ascetics and *brahmins* who are heads of great companies of disciples, who have large retinues, who are leaders of schools, well known and renowned, and held in high esteem by the multitude, such teachers as *Purana Kassapa*, *Makkhali Gosâla*, *Ajita Kesakambali*, *Pakudha Kaccâyana*, *Saṅjaya Belatthaputta*, *Nigantha Nâtaputta*. Have all of these attained realization, as each of them would have it believed, or has none of them, or is it that some have attained realization and others not?” Our Buddha then said, “Enough, *Subhadda*! Let it be as it may, whether all of them have attained realization, as each of them would have it believed, or whether none of them has, or whether some have attained realization and others not. I will teach you the Dhamma, *Subhadda*; listen and heed it well, and I will speak.”

Thereafter, Our Buddha taught him the Dhamma. He said, “In whatsoever Dhamma and Discipline, *Subhadda*, there is not found the Noble Eightfold Path, neither is there found a true ascetic of the first, second, third, or fourth degree of saintliness. But in whatsoever Dhamma and Discipline there is found the Noble Eightfold Path, there is found a true ascetic of the first, second, third, and fourth degrees of saintliness. Now, in this Dhamma and Discipline, *Subhadda*, is found the Noble Eightfold Path; and in it alone are also found true ascetics of the first, second, third, and fourth degrees of saintliness. Devoid of true ascetics are the systems of other teachers. But if, *Subhadda*, the *bhikkhus* live righteously, the world will not be destitute of *arahants*.”

Then, the Buddha, addressing Venerable *Ananda* said, “It may be, *Ananda*, that to some among you, the thought will come: 'Ended is the word of the Master; we have a Master no longer.' But it should not, *Ananda*, be so considered. For that which I have proclaimed and made known as the Dhamma and the Discipline, that shall be your Master when I am gone.

and, *Ananda*, where as now the *bhikkhus* address one another as 'friend,' âvuso let it not be so when I am gone. The senior *bhikkhus*, *Ananda*, may address the junior ones by their name, their family name, or as 'friend'; but the junior *bhikkhus* should address the senior ones as 'venerable sir' or 'your reverence' [Bhante]. If it is desired, *Ananda*, the Sangha may, when I am gone, abolish the lesser and minor rules. *Ananda*, when I am gone, let the higher penalty be imposed upon the *bhikkhu Channa*. "[Because *Channa* was Prince *Siddhârtha*'s charioteer who did not want to submit to the Buddha's discipline.]

In this manner, the Buddha gave wonderful admonitions for us all. Let us reflect many wonderful and marvelous virtues of the Buddha. As a human, he developed all these qualities and because of that, he became the Buddha. Like a father addressing his sons and daughters from his deathbed, he addressed the monks with the following advice.

Our Buddha said, "It may be, *bhikkhus*, that one of you is in doubt or perplexity as to the Buddha, the Dhamma, or the Sangha, the path or the practice. Then, question, *bhikkhus*! Do not be given to remorse later on with the thought: 'The Master was with us face to face, yet face to face we failed to ask him.'" However when this was said, the *bhikkhus* were silent. And yet a second and a third time the Blessed One said to them: "It may be, *bhikkhus*, that one of you is in doubt or perplexity as to the Buddha, the Dhamma, or the Sangha, the path or the practice. Then question, *bhikkhus*! Do not be given to remorse later on with the thought: 'The Master was with us face to face, yet face to face we failed to ask him.'"

And for a second and a third time the *bhikkhus* were silent. Then, the Blessed One said to them: "It may be, *bhikkhus*, out of respect for the Master that you ask no questions. Then, *bhikkhus*, let friend communicate it to friend." Yet still the *bhikkhus* were silent. And the Venerable *Ananda* spoke to the Blessed One, saying: "Marvelous it is, O Venerable sir, most wonderful it is! This faith I have in the community of *bhikkhus*, that not even one *bhikkhu* is in doubt or perplexity

and, *Ananda*, where as now the *bhikkhus* address one another as 'friend,' âvuso let it not be so when I am gone. The senior *bhikkhus*, *Ananda*, may address the junior ones by their name, their family name, or as 'friend'; but the junior *bhikkhus* should address the senior ones as 'venerable sir' or 'your reverence' [Bhante]. If it is desired, *Ananda*, the Sangha may, when I am gone, abolish the lesser and minor rules. *Ananda*, when I am gone, let the higher penalty be imposed upon the *bhikkhu Channa*. "[Because *Channa* was Prince *Siddhârtha*'s charioteer who did not want to submit to the Buddha's discipline.]

In this manner, the Buddha gave wonderful admonitions for us all. Let us reflect many wonderful and marvelous virtues of the Buddha. As a human, he developed all these qualities and because of that, he became the Buddha. Like a father addressing his sons and daughters from his deathbed, he addressed the monks with the following advice.

Our Buddha said, "It may be, *bhikkhus*, that one of you is in doubt or perplexity as to the Buddha, the Dhamma, or the Sangha, the path or the practice. Then, question, *bhikkhus*! Do not be given to remorse later on with the thought: 'The Master was with us face to face, yet face to face we failed to ask him.'" However when this was said, the *bhikkhus* were silent. And yet a second and a third time the Blessed One said to them: "It may be, *bhikkhus*, that one of you is in doubt or perplexity as to the Buddha, the Dhamma, or the Sangha, the path or the practice. Then question, *bhikkhus*! Do not be given to remorse later on with the thought: 'The Master was with us face to face, yet face to face we failed to ask him.'"

And for a second and a third time the *bhikkhus* were silent. Then, the Blessed One said to them: "It may be, *bhikkhus*, out of respect for the Master that you ask no questions. Then, *bhikkhus*, let friend communicate it to friend." Yet still the *bhikkhus* were silent. And the Venerable *Ananda* spoke to the Blessed One, saying: "Marvelous it is, O Venerable sir, most wonderful it is! This faith I have in the community of *bhikkhus*, that not even one *bhikkhu* is in doubt or perplexity

as to the Buddha, the Dhamma, or the Sangha, the path or the practice.”

The Buddha then said, “Out of faith, *Ananda*, you speak thus. However, *Ananda*, the *Tathâgata* knows for certain that among this community of *bhikkhus* there is not even one *bhikkhu* who is in doubt or perplexity as to the Buddha, the Dhamma, or the Sangha, the path or the practice. For, *Ananda*, among these five hundred *bhikkhus* even the lowest is a stream-enterer, secure from downfall, assured, and bound for enlightenment.”

Now, the Buddha is about to make his last utterance. He said, “Behold now, *bhikkhus*, I exhort you: All compounded things are subject to vanish. Strive with earnestness! (*Handa'dâni bhikkhave âmantayâmi vo vayadhammâ sankhârâ, appamâdene sampâdetha*).”

According to this last word of the Buddha, one has to practice with diligence to develop mindfulness, alertness, and earnestness. In other words, one has to develop skills. What are the skills to be developed? They are the Thirty-Seven Factors of Enlightenment.

Afterwards, Our Buddha, who extended his compassion and loving friendliness to the whole three systems of the world, who illuminated the whole three systems of the world with the light of wisdom, who with boundless compassion and sympathy taught the Dhamma to all beings irrespective of their differences for forty-five years; he attained the first *jhâna*, second *jhâna*, third *jhâna* and fourth *jhâna* respectively and then attained the four immaterial attainments of infinite of space, infinite of consciousness, nothingness, and neither-perception nor-non-perception. Finally, he attained the state of cessation of perception and feelings (*saññâ vedayita nirodha*).

Then, Venerable *Ananda* said to Venerable *Anuruddha*. “Venerable *Anuruddha*, the Blessed One has passed away.” Venerable *Anuruddha* then said, “No, friend *Ananda*, the Blessed One has not passed away. He has entered the state of the cessation of perception and feeling.”

as to the Buddha, the Dhamma, or the Sangha, the path or the practice.”

The Buddha then said, “Out of faith, *Ananda*, you speak thus. However, *Ananda*, the *Tathâgata* knows for certain that among this community of *bhikkhus* there is not even one *bhikkhu* who is in doubt or perplexity as to the Buddha, the Dhamma, or the Sangha, the path or the practice. For, *Ananda*, among these five hundred *bhikkhus* even the lowest is a stream-enterer, secure from downfall, assured, and bound for enlightenment.”

Now, the Buddha is about to make his last utterance. He said, “Behold now, *bhikkhus*, I exhort you: All compounded things are subject to vanish. Strive with earnestness! (*Handa'dâni bhikkhave âmantayâmi vo vayadhammâ sankhârâ, appamâdene sampâdetha*).”

According to this last word of the Buddha, one has to practice with diligence to develop mindfulness, alertness, and earnestness. In other words, one has to develop skills. What are the skills to be developed? They are the Thirty-Seven Factors of Enlightenment.

Afterwards, Our Buddha, who extended his compassion and loving friendliness to the whole three systems of the world, who illuminated the whole three systems of the world with the light of wisdom, who with boundless compassion and sympathy taught the Dhamma to all beings irrespective of their differences for forty-five years; he attained the first *jhâna*, second *jhâna*, third *jhâna* and fourth *jhâna* respectively and then attained the four immaterial attainments of infinite of space, infinite of consciousness, nothingness, and neither-perception nor-non-perception. Finally, he attained the state of cessation of perception and feelings (*saññâ vedayita nirodha*).

Then, Venerable *Ananda* said to Venerable *Anuruddha*. “Venerable *Anuruddha*, the Blessed One has passed away.” Venerable *Anuruddha* then said, “No, friend *Ananda*, the Blessed One has not passed away. He has entered the state of the cessation of perception and feeling.”

Now, the Buddha having arisen from the cessation of perceptions and feelings attained the material and immaterial *jhânas* and attainments in descending order. After that again, starting from the first *jhâna*, in ascending order attained the first, second, third, and fourth *jhânas* and finally rising from the fourth *jhâna* immediately passed away. The light of the world was extinguished. Our Buddha attained final passing away into *parinibbâna*, not to be born again. The world was immersed in the darkness of ignorance again. All conditioned things are impermanent. Whatever is in the nature of arising, it is in the nature of passing, perishing. With the passing away of Our Buddha, simultaneously there came a tremendous earthquake, dreadful and astounding, and thunder rolled across the heavens.

Then, the *Brahmâ Sahampati* said,

All must depart-all beings that have life-span
Must shed their compound forms, yea, even one,
A Master such as he, a peerless being,
Powerful in wisdom, the Enlightened One has passed away.

Simultaneously, *Sakka* the head of gods said,

Transient are all compounded things,
Subject to arise and vanish;
Having come into existence they pass away;
Good is the peace when they forever cease.

Simultaneously, Venerable *Anuruddha* said,

“No movement of the breath, but with steadfast heart, Free from desires and tranquil so the sage comes to his end. By mortal pangs unshaken, His mind, like a flame extinguished, finds release.”

This is exactly what happens to each and every Enlightened One's consciousness. Earlier, we mentioned that Our Buddha has clearly stated this in the *Upasiva Sutta* of *The Sutta Nipâta*. Let us recall that same utterance of the Buddha.

Now, the Buddha having arisen from the cessation of perceptions and feelings attained the material and immaterial *jhânas* and attainments in descending order. After that again, starting from the first *jhâna*, in ascending order attained the first, second, third, and fourth *jhânas* and finally rising from the fourth *jhâna* immediately passed away. The light of the world was extinguished. Our Buddha attained final passing away into *parinibbâna*, not to be born again. The world was immersed in the darkness of ignorance again. All conditioned things are impermanent. Whatever is in the nature of arising, it is in the nature of passing, perishing. With the passing away of Our Buddha, simultaneously there came a tremendous earthquake, dreadful and astounding, and thunder rolled across the heavens.

Then, the *Brahmâ Sahampati* said,

All must depart-all beings that have life-span
Must shed their compound forms, yea, even one,
A Master such as he, a peerless being,
Powerful in wisdom, the Enlightened One has passed away.

Simultaneously, *Sakka* the head of gods said,

Transient are all compounded things,
Subject to arise and vanish;
Having come into existence they pass away;
Good is the peace when they forever cease.

Simultaneously, Venerable *Anuruddha* said,

“No movement of the breath, but with steadfast heart, Free from desires and tranquil so the sage comes to his end. By mortal pangs unshaken, His mind, like a flame extinguished, finds release.”

This is exactly what happens to each and every Enlightened One's consciousness. Earlier, we mentioned that Our Buddha has clearly stated this in the *Upasiva Sutta* of *The Sutta Nipâta*. Let us recall that same utterance of the Buddha.

“As a flame overthrown by the force of the wind goes to an end that cannot be classified, so the sage free from naming activity goes to an end that cannot be classified.”

(*Acci yathâ vâtavegena khittâ Attham paleti na upeti sankham Evam muni nâmakayâ vimutto Attham paleti na upeti samkham.*)

Supreme Buddhas are very rare in the world. The Buddhas, silent Buddhas, or *Arahant* Buddhas enjoy that supreme bliss only while they are alive here in this very world. Death is common to all beings born. The Buddha is not a being. [Beings are those who cling to these five aggregates.] Therefore, his passing away is not called a death. Like a lamp, which burns only if there are both wick and oil, a Buddha is living only as long as the five aggregates remain. Just as when the lamp oil is no more, still the wick will burn. However, once the wick is also consumed, the lamp is extinguished.

Since he had no clinging from the time that he attained enlightenment, he had no aggregates effected by clinging. That itself is appeasement, release, and relief, *Nibbâna*.

The *Buddhas* are born after a long, long time. Birth as a human itself is hard. Crossing over the *samsâric* flood is possible only if one is born as a human during the time of the dispensation of the Buddha and by cultivating and developing the three kinds of training: namely morality, concentration, and wisdom. In other words, following the Noble Eightfold Path.

Therefore, those who know the taste of the Dhamma may read this book again and again! May they seek, read, and practice accordingly and come to the coolness and sweetness of life with the real Dhamma as taught by the Buddha himself! May they quickly realize the Four Noble Truths! May all beings be well, happy, and peaceful! May all beings be free from *samsâric* suffering and attain perfect peace, perfect bliss of *Nibbâna*!

“As a flame overthrown by the force of the wind goes to an end that cannot be classified, so the sage free from naming activity goes to an end that cannot be classified.”

(*Acci yathâ vâtavegena khittâ Attham paleti na upeti sankham Evam muni nâmakayâ vimutto Attham paleti na upeti samkham.*)

Supreme Buddhas are very rare in the world. The Buddhas, silent Buddhas, or *Arahant* Buddhas enjoy that supreme bliss only while they are alive here in this very world. Death is common to all beings born. The Buddha is not a being. [Beings are those who cling to these five aggregates.] Therefore, his passing away is not called a death. Like a lamp, which burns only if there are both wick and oil, a Buddha is living only as long as the five aggregates remain. Just as when the lamp oil is no more, still the wick will burn. However, once the wick is also consumed, the lamp is extinguished.

Since he had no clinging from the time that he attained enlightenment, he had no aggregates effected by clinging. That itself is appeasement, release, and relief, *Nibbâna*.

The *Buddhas* are born after a long, long time. Birth as a human itself is hard. Crossing over the *samsâric* flood is possible only if one is born as a human during the time of the dispensation of the Buddha and by cultivating and developing the three kinds of training: namely morality, concentration, and wisdom. In other words, following the Noble Eightfold Path.

Therefore, those who know the taste of the Dhamma may read this book again and again! May they seek, read, and practice accordingly and come to the coolness and sweetness of life with the real Dhamma as taught by the Buddha himself! May they quickly realize the Four Noble Truths! May all beings be well, happy, and peaceful! May all beings be free from *samsâric* suffering and attain perfect peace, perfect bliss of *Nibbâna*!

Foot Notes

^{#1} D.N. Mahâ Parinibbâna Sutta (No.16); M.N. Cula Sihanâda Sutta (No.11); and Ariyaparisena Sutta (No.26)

^{#2} M.N. Bahudhâtuka Sutta (No.115)

^{#3} Dhammapada (Verse 15)

^{#4} A. N. The Numerical Discourses of the Buddha, 1.170(1). Translated by Bhikkhu Bodhi. Boston, Wisdom Publications, 2012

^{#5} A. N. 6. 22. (2). The six things for nondecline are: 1. Not delight in work, (na kammârâmatâ); 2. Not delight in talk (na bhassârâmatâ); 3. Not delight in sleep (na niddârâmatâ); 4. Not delight in company (na sanganikârâmatâ); 5. Being easy to correct (sovacassatâ); and 6. Good friendship (kalyânamittatâ). The Buddha says, “Monks, all those in the past who declined in wholesome qualities declined because of declining of these six qualities. All those in the future who will decline in wholesome qualities will decline because of declining of these six qualities. And all those at present who are declining in wholesome qualities are declining because of declining of these six qualities.”

^{#6} Dhammapada (Verse 194)

^{#7} Dhammapada (Verse 182)

^{#8} D.N. Mahâ Padâna Sutta (No.14)

^{#9} Sutta Nipâta. Nâlaka Sutta (No. 2. 11)

^{#10} S.N. 22.78.(6) The Lion(Yepi te, bhikkhave, devâ dighâyukâ vannavanto sukhabahulâ uccesu vimânesu ciratthitikâ tepi tathâgatassa dhammadesanam sutvâ yebhuyyena bhayam samvegam santâsam âpajjanti 'aniccâva kira, bho, mayam samânâ niccamhâti amaññimha. Addhuvâva kira, bho, mayam samânâ dhuvamhâti amaññimha.Asassatâva kira, bho, mayam samânâ sassatamhâti amaññimha.Mayampi kira, bho, aniccâ addhuvâ asassatâ sakkâyapariyâpannâ'ti. Evam mahiddhiko kho, bhikkhave, tathâgato sadevakassa lokassa, evam mahesakkho, evam mahânubhâvo'ti.

^{#11} M. N. Suttas No. 36, 85, and 100 respectively

^{#12} A.N. Delicate Sutta (No. 3.39.(9) (Yobbanamadamatto vâ, bhikkhave, bhikkhu sikkham paccakkhâya hinâyâvattati. Arogyamadamatto vâ, bhikkhave, bhikkhu...pe... jivitamadamatto vâ, bhikkhave, bhikkhu sikkham paccakkhâya hinâyâvattati'ti.)

^{#13} D.N.Mahâ Padâna Sutta (No.14)

^{#14} M.N. Ariyapariyesana Sutta (No.26)

^{#15} M.N. Mahâ Saccaka Sutta (No.36) also in the Bodhirâja Kumâra (No. 85)

^{#16} Sutta Nipâta. Pabbajja Sutta (Mahâ vagga. 3.1)

Foot Notes

^{#1} D.N. Mahâ Parinibbâna Sutta (No.16); M.N. Cula Sihanâda Sutta (No.11); and Ariyaparisena Sutta (No.26)

^{#2} M.N. Bahudhâtuka Sutta (No.115)

^{#3} Dhammapada (Verse 15)

^{#4} A. N. The Numerical Discourses of the Buddha, 1.170(1). Translated by Bhikkhu Bodhi. Boston, Wisdom Publications, 2012

^{#5} A. N. 6. 22. (2). The six things for nondecline are: 1. Not delight in work, (na kammârâmatâ); 2. Not delight in talk (na bhassârâmatâ); 3. Not delight in sleep (na niddârâmatâ); 4. Not delight in company (na sanganikârâmatâ); 5. Being easy to correct (sovacassatâ); and 6. Good friendship (kalyânamittatâ). The Buddha says, “Monks, all those in the past who declined in wholesome qualities declined because of declining of these six qualities. All those in the future who will decline in wholesome qualities will decline because of declining of these six qualities. And all those at present who are declining in wholesome qualities are declining because of declining of these six qualities.”

^{#6} Dhammapada (Verse 194)

^{#7} Dhammapada (Verse 182)

^{#8} D.N. Mahâ Padâna Sutta (No.14)

^{#9} Sutta Nipâta. Nâlaka Sutta (No. 2. 11)

^{#10} S.N. 22.78.(6) The Lion(Yepi te, bhikkhave, devâ dighâyukâ vannavanto sukhabahulâ uccesu vimânesu ciratthitikâ tepi tathâgatassa dhammadesanam sutvâ yebhuyyena bhayam samvegam santâsam âpajjanti 'aniccâva kira, bho, mayam samânâ niccamhâti amaññimha. Addhuvâva kira, bho, mayam samânâ dhuvamhâti amaññimha.Asassatâva kira, bho, mayam samânâ sassatamhâti amaññimha.Mayampi kira, bho, aniccâ addhuvâ asassatâ sakkâyapariyâpannâ'ti. Evam mahiddhiko kho, bhikkhave, tathâgato sadevakassa lokassa, evam mahesakkho, evam mahânubhâvo'ti.

^{#11} M. N. Suttas No. 36, 85, and 100 respectively

^{#12} A.N. Delicate Sutta (No. 3.39.(9) (Yobbanamadamatto vâ, bhikkhave, bhikkhu sikkham paccakkhâya hinâyâvattati. Arogyamadamatto vâ, bhikkhave, bhikkhu...pe... jivitamadamatto vâ, bhikkhave, bhikkhu sikkham paccakkhâya hinâyâvattati'ti.)

^{#13} D.N.Mahâ Padâna Sutta (No.14)

^{#14} M.N. Ariyapariyesana Sutta (No.26)

^{#15} M.N. Mahâ Saccaka Sutta (No.36) also in the Bodhirâja Kumâra (No. 85)

^{#16} Sutta Nipâta. Pabbajja Sutta (Mahâ vagga. 3.1)

- #17 S. N. 56. Sacca Samyutta Sutta (No. 11)
- #18 A. N. Mahâ Supina Sutta (No. 5)
- #19 Dhammapada (Verse 105)
- #20 S. N. Assâda Sutta (22. 26 (5))
- #21 Sutta Nipâta. Mahâ Padhâna Sutta. (III. 2)
- #22 M. N. Ariyapariyesana Sutta (No. 26)
- #23 M. N. Bhayabherava Sutta (No. 4)
- #24 Dhammapada (Verses 153-154)
- #25 Vinaya, The Code of Discipline, Great Chapter, Bodhi Katha; M. N. Ariyapariyesana Sutta (No. 26); Udâna Pâli (Chapter 1)
- #26 Udâna Pâli, Tathâgatuppâda Sutta (No. 6.10)
- #27 Udâna Pâli, Nanda Vagga, Lokavolokana Sutta (No. 3.10)
- #28 Udâna Pâli, Nigrodha Sutta (No. 1.4) and The Vinaya Mahâ Vagga 1.2 Sutta
- #29 Udâna Pâli, Mucalinda Sutta (No. 2.1)
- #30 Vinaya. Mahâ Vagga under the Râjayatana tree
- #31 S. N. 48. 57. 7. Brahmâ Sahampati Sutta
- #32 S. N. 47. 18. 8. Brahma Sutta
- #33 S. N. 1. 4. 1. Tapokamma Sutta
- #34 A. N. 4. 21. 1. Uruvela Sutta
- #35 Vinaya, The Code of Discipline, Mahâ Vagga and M. N. Ariyapariyesana Sutta (No. 26)
- #36 S. N. 56. 11. 1. Setting in Motion the Wheel of the Dhamma
- #37 M. N. Bahudhâtuka Sutta (No. 115)
- #38 M. N. Mahâ Sihanâda Sutta (No. 12)
- #39 A. N. 4. 36. 6. Drona (Loka) Sutta
- #40 Sutta Nipâta III. 7 Sutta and M. N. Seela Sutta (No. 92)
- #41 Sutta Nipâta (III. 6 Sutta)
- #42 M. N. Brahmâyu Sutta (No. 91)
- #43 M. N. Mahâ Sakuludâyin Sutta (No. 77)
- #44 A.N. 6. Anuttariya Sutta
- #45 D. N. Mahâ Nidâna Sutta (No. 15) and Mahâ Parinibbâna Sutta (No. 16)
- #46 Dhammapada (Verse 316)
- #47 Dhammapada (Verse 315)

- #17 S. N. 56. Sacca Samyutta Sutta (No. 11)
- #18 A. N. Mahâ Supina Sutta (No. 5)
- #19 Dhammapada (Verse 105)
- #20 S. N. Assâda Sutta (22. 26 (5))
- #21 Sutta Nipâta. Mahâ Padhâna Sutta. (III. 2)
- #22 M. N. Ariyapariyesana Sutta (No. 26)
- #23 M. N. Bhayabherava Sutta (No. 4)
- #24 Dhammapada (Verses 153-154)
- #25 Vinaya, The Code of Discipline, Great Chapter, Bodhi Katha; M. N. Ariyapariyesana Sutta (No. 26); Udâna Pâli (Chapter 1)
- #26 Udâna Pâli, Tathâgatuppâda Sutta (No. 6.10)
- #27 Udâna Pâli, Nanda Vagga, Lokavolokana Sutta (No. 3.10)
- #28 Udâna Pâli, Nigrodha Sutta (No. 1.4) and The Vinaya Mahâ Vagga 1.2 Sutta
- #29 Udâna Pâli, Mucalinda Sutta (No. 2.1)
- #30 Vinaya. Mahâ Vagga under the Râjayatana tree
- #31 S. N. 48. 57. 7. Brahmâ Sahampati Sutta
- #32 S. N. 47. 18. 8. Brahma Sutta
- #33 S. N. 1. 4. 1. Tapokamma Sutta
- #34 A. N. 4. 21. 1. Uruvela Sutta
- #35 Vinaya, The Code of Discipline, Mahâ Vagga and M. N. Ariyapariyesana Sutta (No. 26)
- #36 S. N. 56. 11. 1. Setting in Motion the Wheel of the Dhamma
- #37 M. N. Bahudhâtuka Sutta (No. 115)
- #38 M. N. Mahâ Sihanâda Sutta (No. 12)
- #39 A. N. 4. 36. 6. Drona (Loka) Sutta
- #40 Sutta Nipâta III. 7 Sutta and M. N. Seela Sutta (No. 92)
- #41 Sutta Nipâta (III. 6 Sutta)
- #42 M. N. Brahmâyu Sutta (No. 91)
- #43 M. N. Maha Sakuludâyin Sutta (No. 77)
- #44 A.N. 6. Anuttariya Sutta
- #45 D. N. Mahâ Nidâna Sutta (No. 15) and Mahâ Parinibbâna Sutta (No. 16)
- #46 Dhammapada (Verse 316)
- #47 Dhammapada (Verse 315)

- #48 M. N. Rathavinita Sutta (No. 24)
- #49 M. N. Mahâ Cattarisaka Sutta (No. 117)
- #50 M. N. Mahâ Saropama Sutta (No. 29)
- #51 D. N. Mahâ Parinibbâna Sutta (No. 16)
- #52 S. N. 47. Friends Sutta (No. 48.8)
- #53 A. N. 4. Padhâna Sutta
- #54 S. N. 56. 11. Dhammacakkapavattana Sutta
- #55 S. N. 55. 5. 5. Sâriputta Sutta
- #56 S. N. 45. 6. 6. A Certain Bhikkhu Sutta
- #57 S. N. 45. 7. 7. A Certain Bhikkhu Sutta
- #58 S. N. 45. 4. 4. The Brahmin Sutta
- #59 M. N. Mahâ Cattarisaka Sutta (No. 117)
- #60 K. N. Khuddaka Pâtha, Short Passages, The Novice's Questions
- #61 Dhammapada (Verse 273)
- #62 D. N. Mahâ Satipatthâna Sutta (No. 22) and M.N. Mahâ Satipatthâna Sutta (No. 10)
- #63 M. N. Mahâ Hatthipadopama Sutta (No. 28)
- #64 Dhammapada (Verse 348)
- #65 Udâna Pâli 1. 10. Bâhiya Sutta (In the Mahâ Parinibbâna Sutta (No. 16) of the Dîgha Nikâya, the Buddha said there are four persons worthy to be respected by building a stupa in their honor: the Supreme Buddha, Silent Buddha, Arahant, and the Universal Monarch.)
- #66 S. N. 51. 1. 1. From the Near Shore Sutta
- #67 S. N. 51. 2. 2. Neglected Sutta
- #68 S. N. 51. 4. 4. Revulsion Sutta
- #69 S. N. 51. 5. 5. In Part Sutta
- #70 S. N. 51. 6. 6. Completely Sutta
- #71 S. N. 51. 18. 8. A Bhikkhu Sutta
- #72 S. N. 51. 15. 5. Unnâbha Sutta
- #73 S. N. 51. 32. 12. Tathâgata Sutta
- #74 D. N. Maha Parinibbâna Sutta (No. 16)
- #75 M. N. Anâpânasati Sutta (No. 118)
- #76 M. N. Indriya Bhâvanâ Sutta (No. 152)
- #77 Dhammapada (Verse 38)

- #48 M. N. Rathavinita Sutta (No. 24)
- #49 M. N. Mahâ Cattarisaka Sutta (No. 117)
- #50 M. N. Mahâ Saropama Sutta (No. 29)
- #51 D. N. Mahâ Parinibbâna Sutta (No. 16)
- #52 S. N. 47. Friends Sutta (No. 48.8)
- #53 A. N. 4. Padhâna Sutta
- #54 S. N. 56. 11. Dhammacakkapavattana Sutta
- #55 S. N. 55. 5. 5. Sâriputta Sutta
- #56 S. N. 45. 6. 6. A Certain Bhikkhu Sutta
- #57 S. N. 45. 7. 7. A Certain Bhikkhu Sutta
- #58 S. N. 45. 4. 4. The Brahmin Sutta
- #59 M. N. Mahâ Cattarisaka Sutta (No. 117)
- #60 K. N. Khuddaka Pâtha, Short Passages, The Novice's Questions
- #61 Dhammapada (Verse 273)
- #62 D. N. Mahâ Satipatthâna Sutta (No. 22) and M.N. Mahâ Satipatthana Sutta (No. 10)
- #63 M. N. Mahâ Hatthipadopama Sutta (No. 28)
- #64 Dhammapada (Verse 348)
- #65 Udâna Pâli 1. 10. Bâhiya Sutta (In the Mahâ Parinibbâna Sutta (No. 16) of the Dîgha Nikâya, the Buddha said there are four persons worthy to be respected by building a stupa in their honor: the Supreme Buddha, Silent Buddha, Arahant, and the Universal Monarch.)
- #66 S. N. 51. 1. 1. From the Near Shore Sutta
- #67 S. N. 51. 2. 2. Neglected Sutta
- #68 S. N. 51. 4. 4. Revulsion Sutta
- #69 S. N. 51. 5. 5. In Part Sutta
- #70 S. N. 51. 6. 6. Completely Sutta
- #71 S. N. 51. 18. 8. A Bhikkhu Sutta
- #72 S. N. 51. 15. 5. Unnâbha Sutta
- #73 S. N. 51. 32. 12. Tathâgata Sutta
- #74 D. N. Maha Parinibbâna Sutta (No. 16)
- #75 M. N. Anâpânasati Sutta (No. 118)
- #76 M. N. Indriya Bhâvanâ Sutta (No. 152)
- #77 Dhammapada (Verse 38)

- #78 M. N. Canki Sutta (No. 95)
- #79 M. N. Mahâ Sihanâda Sutta (No. 12)
- #80 M. N. Mahâ Saccaka Sutta (No. 36)
- #81 S. N. 1. 2. 9. 9. Candima Sutta
- #82 M. N. Ariyapariyesana Sutta (No. 26)
- #83 S. N. 22. 5. 5. Concentration
- #84 S. N. 1. 51. 1. Old Age
- #85 S. N. 1. 13. 3. None Equal to That for a Son
- #86 Sutta Nipâta. 1.10. (Alavaka Sutta)
- #87 M. N. Ariyapariyesana Sutta (No. 26)
- #88 S. N. 56. 30. 10. Gavampati Sutta
- #89 S. N. Anâpânasati Samyutta (Sutta No. 13.3)
- #90 M. N. Satipatthâna Sutta (No. 10)
- #91 M. N. Sutta Nos. 118 and 119; S.N. Chapter 54. 10. 10 Kimbila, 13. 3 Ananda
- #92 M. N. Satipatthâna Sutta (No. 10)
- #93 M. N. Mahâ Hatthipadopama Sutta (No. 28)
- #94 M. N. Bahuvédaniya Sutta (No. 59)
- #95 S. N. 35. 232. 5. Kotthita Sutta
- #96 S. N. 46. 5. 5. Bhikkhu Sutta
- #97 S. N. 46. 1. 1. Himâlayas Sutta
- #98 S. N. 46. 4. 4. Clothes
- #99 S. N. 46. 3. 3. Virtue
- #100 S. N. 46. 7. 7. The Peaked House
- #101 S. N. 46. 9. 9. Arisen
- #102 S. N. 1. 67. 7. Ensnared
- #103 Sutta Nipâta. Ajita Sutta (No. 5.1)
- #104 D.N. Mahâ Nidâna Sutta (No. 15)
- #105 S. N. 56. 11. Dhammacakkappavattana Sutta
- #106 S. N. 2. 26. 6. Rohitassa Sutta
- #107 M. N. Mahâ Hatthipadopama Sutta (No. 28)
- #108 S. N. 56. 21. 1. Kotigâma Sutta

- #78 M. N. Canki Sutta (No. 95)
- #79 M. N. Mahâ Sihanâda Sutta (No. 12)
- #80 M. N. Mahâ Saccaka Sutta (No. 36)
- #81 S. N. 1. 2. 9. 9. Candima Sutta
- #82 M. N. Ariyapariyesana Sutta (No. 26)
- #83 S. N. 22. 5. 5. Concentration
- #84 S. N. 1. 51. 1. Old Age
- #85 S. N. 1. 13. 3. None Equal to That for a Son
- #86 Sutta Nipâta. 1.10. (Alavaka Sutta)
- #87 M. N. Ariyapariyesana Sutta (No. 26)
- #88 S. N. 56. 30. 10. Gavampati Sutta
- #89 S. N. Anâpânasati Samyutta (Sutta No. 13.3)
- #90 M. N. Satipatthâna Sutta (No. 10)
- #91 M. N. Sutta Nos. 118 and 119; S.N. Chapter 54. 10. 10 Kimbila, 13. 3 Ananda
- #92 M. N. Satipatthâna Sutta (No. 10)
- #93 M. N. Mahâ Hatthipadopama Sutta (No. 28)
- #94 M. N. Bahuvédaniya Sutta (No. 59)
- #95 S. N. 35. 232. 5. Kotthita Sutta
- #96 S. N. 46. 5. 5. Bhikkhu Sutta
- #97 S. N. 46. 1. 1. Himâlayas Sutta
- #98 S. N. 46. 4. 4. Clothes
- #99 S. N. 46. 3. 3. Virtue
- #100 S. N. 46. 7. 7. The Peaked House
- #101 S. N. 46. 9. 9. Arisen
- #102 S. N. 1. 67. 7. Ensnared
- #103 Sutta Nipâta. Ajita Sutta (No. 5.1)
- #104 D.N. Mahâ Nidâna Sutta (No. 15)
- #105 S. N. 56. 11. Dhammacakkappavattana Sutta
- #106 S. N. 2. 26. 6. Rohitassa Sutta
- #107 M. N. Mahâ Hatthipadopama Sutta (No. 28)
- #108 S. N. 56. 21. 1. Kotigâma Sutta

- #109 S. N. 56. 23. 3. The Perfectly Enlightened One
- #110 S. N. 56. 26. 6. Friends
- #111 S. N. 56. 30. 10. Gavampati
- #112 S. N. 56. 31. 1. Simsapa Grove
- #113 S. N. 56. 34. 4. Clothes
- #114 S. N. 56. 36. 6. Creatures
- #115 S. N. 56. 46. 6. Darkness
- #116 S. N. 56. 47. 7. Yoke With a Hole
- #117 S. N. 56. 51. 1. The Fingernail
- #118 S. N. 56. 52. 2. The Pond
- #119 S. N. 56. 59. 9. The Mountain
- #120 S. N. 56. 60. 10. The Mountain
- #121 M. N. Mahâ Cattarisaka Sutta (No. 117)
- #122 M. N. Sammâditthi Sutta (No. 9)
- #123 S. N. 12. 65. 5. The City
- #124 S. N. 45. 4. 4. The Brahmin
- #125 S. N. 45. 6. 6. A Certain Bhikkhu
- #126 S. N. 45. 48. 8. Final Nibbâna Without Clinging
- #127 S. N. 45. 179. 9. Lower Fetters
- #128 S. N. 45. 180. 10. Higher Fetters
- #129 S. N. 35. 28. 6. Burning
- #130 Theragâtha - Rakkhita Theragâtha. 1.79. (Sabbo râgo pahino me-Sabbo doso samuhato Sabbo me vigato moho sitibhutosmi nibbuto - All my lust, hatred and delusion extinguished and I came to the state of coolness.)
- #131 S. N. 22. 1. Bhâra Sutta
- #132 S. N. 22. 79. 7. Being Devoured
- #133 Sutta Nipâta. Sutta No. 39
- #134 M. N. Madhupindika Sutta (No.18)
- #135 Sutta Nipâta. Karaniya Metta Sutta (No. 1.8)
- #136 M. N. Mahâ Tanhâ Sankhaya Sutta (No. 38)
- #137 Sutta Nipâta. Dvayatânupassanâ Sutta (No. III.12)
- #138 S. N. Bija Sutta (No. 22. 54. 2)
- #139 D. N. Kevadda Sutta (No. 11)

- #109 S. N. 56. 23. 3. The Perfectly Enlightened One
- #110 S. N. 56. 26. 6. Friends
- #111 S. N. 56. 30. 10. Gavampati
- #112 S. N. 56. 31. 1. Simsapa Grove
- #113 S. N. 56. 34. 4. Clothes
- #114 S. N. 56. 36. 6. Creatures
- #115 S. N. 56. 46. 6. Darkness
- #116 S. N. 56. 47. 7. Yoke With a Hole
- #117 S. N. 56. 51. 1. The Fingernail
- #118 S. N. 56. 52. 2. The Pond
- #119 S. N. 56. 59. 9. The Mountain
- #120 S. N. 56. 60. 10. The Mountain
- #121 M. N. Mahâ Cattarisaka Sutta (No. 117)
- #122 M. N. Sammâditthi Sutta (No. 9)
- #123 S. N. 12. 65. 5. The City
- #124 S. N. 45. 4. 4. The Brahmin
- #125 S. N. 45. 6. 6. A Certain Bhikkhu
- #126 S. N. 45. 48. 8. Final Nibbâna Without Clinging
- #127 S. N. 45. 179. 9. Lower Fetters
- #128 S. N. 45. 180. 10. Higher Fetters
- #129 S. N. 35. 28. 6. Burning
- #130 Theragâtha - Rakkhita Theragâtha. 1.79. (Sabbo râgo pahino me-Sabbo doso samuhato Sabbo me vigato moho sitibhutosmi nibbuto - All my lust, hatred and delusion extinguished and I came to the state of coolness.)
- #131 S. N. 22. 1. Bhâra Sutta
- #132 S. N. 22. 79. 7. Being Devoured
- #133 Sutta Nipâta. Sutta No. 39
- #134 M. N. Madhupindika Sutta (No.18)
- #135 Sutta Nipâta. Karaniya Metta Sutta (No. 1.8)
- #136 M. N. Mahâ Tanhâ Sankhaya Sutta (No. 38)
- #137 Sutta Nipâta. Dvayatânupassanâ Sutta (No. III.12)
- #138 S. N. Bija Sutta (No. 22. 54. 2)
- #139 D. N. Kevadda Sutta (No. 11)

- ^{#140} M. N. Aggivacchagotta Sutta. (No. 72)
^{#141} Sutta Nipâta. Upasiva's Questions (Verse 6)
^{#142} Sutta Nipâta. Vangisa Sutta (No. II. 12)
^{#143} D. N. Mahâ Parinibbâna Sutta (No. 16)
^{#144} S. N. 56. 22. 2. Kotigama Sutta
^{#145} S. N. 56. 21. 1. Kotigama Sutta
^{#146} S. N. 47. 2. 2. Mindful
^{#147} She was a famous courtesan of that time in Râjagaha, India.

- ^{#140} M. N. Aggivacchagotta Sutta. (No. 72)
^{#141} Sutta Nipâta. Upasiva's Questions (Verse 6)
^{#142} Sutta Nipâta. Vangisa Sutta (No. II. 12)
^{#143} D. N. Mahâ Parinibbâna Sutta (No. 16)
^{#144} S. N. 56. 22. 2. Kotigama Sutta
^{#145} S. N. 56. 21. 1. Kotigama Sutta
^{#146} S. N. 47. 2. 2. Mindful
^{#147} She was a famous courtesan of that time in Râjagaha, India.